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SACRAMENTS

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PRAYER IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

A Study of some Moments and Masters of the Christian Life, from Clement of Alexandria to Fénelon

WORSHIP

Its Necessity, Nature and Expression

SACRAMENTS

A STUDY OF SOME MOMENTS IN THE ATTEMPT TO DEFINE THEIR MEANING FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

BY

A. L. LILLEY

CANON RESIDENTIARY
CHANCELLOR AND PRÆLECTOR OF HEREFORD

NEW YORK
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1929

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Published January, 1929.

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To My Colleagues

IN THE CHAPTER OF
THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF HEREFORD

R.W., A.T.B., B.H.S., R.T.A. M-K.

PREFACE

THEOLOGY seems too often to be regarded as a kind of hard and unfeeling stepmother to religion, restraining the free play of its generous impulses under an alien bondage and prematurely stiffening the native elasticity of its soul. It was the purpose of these lectures, delivered in Canterbury and Hereford Cathedrals in the Lent of this year, to enter a protest against such a view as wholly unjust and unintelligent. I have contended that without theology, without, that is to say, the most careful thought about its own scope and meaning, religion not only runs riot but runs to seed. To illustrate this theme I chose the example of general sacramental doctrine in Christian theology, as in a former book[1] I had used for its illustration the specifically Christian doctrine of prayer. And just as in the earlier book I

[1] *Prayer in Christian Theology*, S.C.M., 1925.

selected certain "moments," or historically significant occasions, in the development of one doctrine, so I have here adopted the same method of treatment for the other.

The last chapter was not part of the original lectures. The addition is due principally to the encouragement of my friend and colleague, Canon Streeter. In discussing the lectures with him I expressed regret that I had not been able to include the doctrine of transubstantiation among the *faits justificatifs* of my thesis. The difficulty which I felt was that Eucharistic doctrine had by St Thomas's time assumed the character of an exception to general sacramental theory. The *differentia* of the Eucharist, which for St Thomas made it a *species* by itself in the *genus* of sacraments, was that it became a sacrament by the mere consecration of the elements apart from their use, while other sacraments became sacraments only in their use. Thus the water of baptism was consecrated and became a *res sacramenti*, a sacramental reality, in and not before or apart from its use. The Eucharist, on the other hand, became a full sacramental reality the moment the words of

institution had been uttered, before and apart from the reception of the consecrated elements. It is easy to see how inevitably involved was this view in the logic of the "Hoc corpus est meum." Yet it was probably not long before St Thomas's own time that this logical implication became fully explicit. Once, however, that point had been reached the distinction became a commonplace for all later theology—at least of the Roman and Lutheran types. With every desire to escape from its implications Luther never really succeeded in doing so. Calvin succeeded only by abandoning the conception of instrumentality as effected by consecration alone. The *res sacramenti* of the Eucharist was for him not an instrument prepared beforehand, but as in the case of the other sacraments a reality only *in* the reception.

Thus Eucharistic doctrine, with its *differentia* in the effect of consecration—and transubstantiation was of course specially concerned with consecration—lay in some measure outside general sacramental theory. Yet, on the other hand, I saw in the doctrine of transubstantiation, as treated by St Thomas, a very definite attempt

to preserve the really sacramental or spiritual character of the Presence in the Eucharist. It seemed worth while, therefore, to vindicate this frequently neglected aspect of St Thomas's intention and accomplishment.

A. L. LILLEY

September 11, 1928

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SACRAMENTS

I

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

It is impossible to understand any theological statement, whatever the degree of authority it may claim, without first exploring the discussions which have led up to it. Every authoritative theological statement, every dogma as we call it, is intended to be the conclusive resolution of a doubt, and it is the history of that doubt which is all-important for the understanding of the dogma. Thus much would probably be conceded nowadays by every student of dogmatic theology. Exposition and apologetic remain barren so long as they are not wedded to history. But there is a further reason for my choice of the historical method, viz., my personal belief that no dogma is final in the sense of being irreformable. The history of every dogma belongs to the future as to the past. However fixed and intangible its form, its exact import is still, and will always

remain, subject to some degree of modification. For this view I cannot claim the same measure of agreement as for the other, and so I propose to occupy this first lecture in attempting to state as clearly as I can what it means for myself.

I would begin by insisting on a necessary distinction between religion and theology. Religion I would define as man's spiritual apprehension of Reality, and theology as the intellectual ordering of what has been thus apprehended. Now for practical purposes a definition must be brief. Its aim is to include everything that pertains to the essential nature of the thing defined in the most concise terms possible. But it necessarily suffers from its brevity. As a rule it requires, if it would escape vagueness, further elucidation of its own terms. And the definition of religion which I have just proposed may seem to demand some more detailed account of what I mean by the three words "Reality," "Apprehension," and "Spiritual." Let us take first the word and the thing Reality. We feel at once when we use the word that it presupposes the word and the thing "appearance." Its very use implies that there is something more, and more real, beneath the surface of things than is apparent

on their surface. What we see of things is valuable for us only because it enables us to divine in things something which is invisible. That this is the case even in the material order the speculation of the modern physicist sufficiently demonstrates. The visible appearances of matter are for him unintelligible until he has reached to the invisible in the constitution of the atom and the electron. But it is most obvious in our experience of living things. There what we see is change, movement, action, or rather things which change, move, act, and from this appearance presented to our senses we divine the mysterious and invisible reality of *life*. This divination of the invisible seems to accompany and penetrate all our seeing. We are so constituted that we cannot *simply* see or perceive by the senses. Everything which the senses perceive is significant of something beyond the realm of sense. Strictly speaking, there is nothing which for us is only appearance. Some aspect of reality, some value as we say, some hint of beauty or goodness or truth, can break through the meanest and, as we say lightly, the most insignificant forms of appearance, and if reality does not thus break through, the appearance is indeed for us insig-

nificant. It means nothing. We can hardly be said even to see it. It may pass across the range of our vision, but it fails to register itself there as a thing really seen.

Now it is in virtue of this instinctive certainty of some kind of invisible reality behind all appearance that man can be rightly accounted a naturally religious animal. For in the end everything that he knows or can know through sense perception seems to him but the various appearance of one single Reality. And even then he is not satisfied. For another instinct of his nature requires that that supreme Reality should not only include all the limited forms of reality which he has divined in and through the various aspects of the world of appearance, but also that it should be itself an absolute and illimitable Perfection. He cannot be satisfied with a Reality which will account for the whole world of appearance, which is just the reality of that world. He must conceive it also as Reality independent of that world, complete in itself and sufficient to itself, absolutely self-existent in its infinite and invariable Perfection. He cannot be satisfied with a World-soul, with a God immanent in the world as just *its* Reality. He must reach

further to the affirmation of a transcendent God, of a God whose immanence in the world is determined not by the limited scope of its existence but by the transcendent nature of His own perfection. "Inquietum est cor meum donec requiescat in Te."

With the second term of our definition "apprehension" there is less difficulty. To apprehend is to lay hold of, to seize, and the only way of seizing, of laying hold upon the invisible is through consciousness of it. To apprehend reality is to have such certainty of its existence, and in some degree of its nature, that we can in a very real sense claim to know it. However much its completeness may transcend our knowledge, we are capable of making our own something of the true quality of its power. We touch as it were the hem of its garment, and something of its authentic power passes into us. We know, we apprehend, its quality because the moment we recognize the faintest hint of that quality its specific power manifests itself in us. Indeed, it is in the last resort less true to say that we apprehend reality than that it apprehends us. It is not so much that we penetrate to the invisible as that it reaches out in an act of self-manifestation to

us. We are reminded of the teaching of the Mediæval Schoolmen that to know a thing is to possess it, that the mind receives and makes its own the reality which it knows, and that that is just what is meant by knowing it. The inner reality of anything they called its form, and they held that the forms of all the objects of our knowledge are actually in our minds, have become constituent parts of those minds. And they held also, or at least most of them did, that just as outward objects by presenting themselves to our senses cause the senses to perceive them, so the forms, the inner realities, of things present themselves to the mind in order that the mind may know them at all. Reality played the leading rôle in its own apprehension. If it came to be apprehended by us, it was because it first apprehended us. Whatever the value of this conception as a theory of knowledge, it is evident how close is its accord with the requirements of religion in that it emphasises the beforehandness, the prevenience as we say, of God, the Supreme Reality, in all our search for Him. Pascal represents God as saying to the Soul that is seeking for Him and seems to be seeking in vain: "In that thou art seeking for me, thou

hast already found me." The search is the discovery, just because the Reality that was sought for was there beforehand as the power that provoked and enabled the quest. And St Paul had felt the same truth when he wrote: "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Jesus Christ. For [though apprehended of Him] I count not myself as yet to have apprehended."

We have thus prepared ourselves almost imperceptibly for an understanding of the last word of our definition, "spiritual." All religious apprehension, *i.e.* all apprehension of the objects with which religion is concerned, is of the whole man. The wholeness of our nature must be pledged to such apprehension. That is just what we mean by calling it spiritual. It is not only, as certainly it is not primarily, with the discursive reason that we apprehend such objects. It is by a kind of intuition which is called into play by the emotions at their deepest and in their widest reach. And that intuition claims again the wholeness of our nature in the full range of its active power. Every active capacity of our being feels itself pledged to the service of the Highest Reality in the very act of our perceiving it. And still

further our whole being is enlarged into a need to adore the perfection of that Reality, and knows itself in turn enlarged by that adoration. And perhaps it is only then that the mind can wisely and fruitfully speculate upon the content of its first intuition, can begin to know, as far as it can ever know, by discursive thought, what it has first known through feeling, as a compelling motive of action, as an object commanding adoration. Thus at any rate the whole man apprehends the ultimate reality, thus only can it be apprehended. It is what we mean when we describe the apprehension of the object or objects of religion as spiritual.

We have thus reached a definition of religion which may be sufficient for our purpose of distinguishing it from theology. It is our spiritual apprehension of reality. Even for that purpose indeed, as we shall see presently, the definition is not exhaustive. But at least it brings into relief its main difference from theology, viz.—that the latter is a purely intellectual discipline. Theology is a science like any other. It is the purely intellectual ordering of such knowledge as is possible in one particular field of fact. The facts with which it deals are those whose reality the religious

intuition has already caught in a flash of immediate insight. Now it must be remembered that though the Supreme Reality, God, is apprehended, as I have said, by the wholeness of our nature, it is yet apprehended pre-eminently, even in that first intuition, as truth. The certainty of the religious prophet is indeed a certainty of the whole man, but it is a certainty *for* the mind. In the measure that it can at all be transmitted to others, it must be transmitted through the mind. The truth-character, then, of Revelation, of that which is immediately apprehended by the religious sense, is all-important. The truth which it contains must be carefully elicited, as we say, detached from the emotional nucleus in which it was first conceived, and deliberately placed in its due relations with all other knowledge which we may possess. For truth is or at least aims, by the necessary requirements of its own nature, at being a completed system. And so it is impossible for us to hold any truth as a certainty, however overwhelming its certainty may be, in isolation from other certainties. The mind inevitably sets to work upon every certainty that, as we say, comes to us, in order to determine its exact truth-value as a part of

the whole system of truth so far elaborated by us. Now this is the function of theology with regard to the certainties which religion proclaims. It has to make intellectually explicit the truth-values implicit in every religious certainty, and not only to correlate those truth-values as a system of definitely religious truth but also to relate them to all other truth of whatever kind to which we may have attained. And as our achievement of truth is a slow and arduous process, and a process which can never be exhausted, it follows that theology is a scientific discipline which will always have fresh opportunities for its exercise.

It is true that this larger scope of theology has not always been recognised. The theology of the Jewish Rabbis as that of the Christian Fathers was satisfied with being, for the most part, nothing more than an interpretation of the original Revelation with which each was concerned, and a harmonisation of its various elements. But the fully developed Christian theology of the Mediæval Schoolmen definitely recognised and accepted the larger function of theology. With their belief in the reason as the distinguishing faculty of man, as the sole faculty in virtue of which it could be said that he

was made in the image of God, it was inevitable that they should undertake on the largest scale possible in their moment the rationalisation of religion, the demonstration of its complete reasonableness. Indeed, their uncompromising rationalism led them into an error from which we still suffer. Their distrust of the whole emotional side of our nature as radically infected with concupiscence, their unqualified exaltation of the reason over all our other faculties, led them to conceive of Revelation itself as entirely intellectual, as an unadulterated truth-communication from the Divine mind to the human. St Thomas for instance held that we could have no intuitive knowledge of God. To him intuition seemed a delusive escape from the strictly logical processes of the reason. It is true that in holding this opinion he was an innovator on the practically integral tradition of Christianity up to his time. But he has had his revenge by imposing upon Christian thought a purely intellectual conception of Revelation which has hardly been challenged until our own time and which still dominates the Roman schools. We have at last begun to conceive of Revelation, of the religious certainties attained by all the prophets of our race, as mediated

through as it were a flash of insight, an insight made possible no doubt and possibly only through a long and eager discipline of the perceiving soul, but an insight in which the strictly intellectual element exists as yet only in germ. But this has been a digression from my main point. What I wanted mainly to underline is the wide intellectual range given to Christian theology by the labours of the schoolmen, and inherited by us for application to more difficult problems and in more difficult conditions than they could have deemed possible.

But there is another function of theology which we can only appreciate in turning to another aspect of religion of which so far it has not been necessary to take account. We have been content hitherto—it has been sufficient for our immediate purpose—to define religion as our spiritual apprehension of Reality. But clearly it is something very much more. It is communion, communion the most intimate and most sustained, with that Reality. Religion as a concrete fact in our human world consists of all the rites and ceremonies which express and foster that communion. And by rites I mean every outward expression of religious feeling, even if it be only the com-

munal silence of the Quakers. Now these rites are sometimes conceived of as appointed by God Himself to be a means of communion with Him. Sometimes they are frankly recognised as arising out of man's age-long experience of what has proved most helpful to him in his religious life. But in either case they are a necessity of that life of communion with God. For the ordinary man such communion would be either impossible or gravely reduced in quality without their aid. Worship indeed is, as the mediæval theologians so clearly saw and fearlessly confessed, for man's sake. We need not, of course, in offering it be conscious of that fact. Because we are offering it to God, and in our offering thinking only of Him, we may perhaps without grave danger to the religious life think that we are offering it in order to add to His honour and glory. But there is a point at which we need to remind ourselves of the words of, I think, the author of the *Imitation*: "We do not need to pray to God to inform him of our needs. He knows far better than we our real needs, the needs which He will satisfy. We do not need to praise God in order to add to His glory. His glory is infinite, and cannot be increased one

iota by the worship of all His creatures." No, these things are for our own sake, that we through them may ascend into more sincere and more confident communion with Him. If without them we could be in constant communion with Him, if the momentary and repeated means had become unnecessary because that communion had become uninterrupted and ever sure of itself, then we should, as certain mystics like St John of the Cross saw, be offering God a still more perfect worship. External worship is and always will be necessary because few men can attain to uninterrupted communion with God. External worship is necessary because without it few men would be capable of feeling that communion at all. None the less we need to remind ourselves continually of its limitations even as a means. In the first place, we need to remind ourselves that it is external and therefore may fail of its effect, that it may become lifeless, barren, a matter of routine, and so become a mimicry of worship. Where it ought to stir us to an awed and chastened vision of God, to an authentic sense of the majestic awfulness of the Supreme Reality, it may become little more than the customary performance of a

pious act to which we attribute some virtue on its own account. But there is another danger of an exactly opposite kind. Because of the nature of the object to whom worship is addressed, it may be and often is attended with deep emotion. Worship indeed has its existence in an atmosphere of emotion. And the mediæval suspicion of emotion, if perhaps excessive, was not altogether ungrounded. For emotion uncriticised, undisciplined, uncontrolled, tends to become more and more a concern with self, an expansion of self which yet never gets beyond self, which finds self again in a magnified form even in the object towards which it directs itself. The dangers which arise from this intimately and necessarily emotional character of worship are not fanciful. The history of religion is strewn with them. And they are as protean as they are real. The letters of advice of the great spiritual directors to their penitents bear witness to their variety, their insidiousness, above all their elusiveness. They are the dangers incident to the emotional religious temperament, just as a routine and a lifeless formality are the dangers of the ordinary unemotional nature.

Now against all these aberrations theology

maintains a consistent protest. It maintains a constant, if not always an effective, witness to the real spirituality of religion, *i.e.* to its reality as a penetration of the life of man by the Divine Life. Nothing which falls short of that conception, nothing which seems to violate its requirements, will finally satisfy theology. It accepts the whole tradition of worship as it has been handed down from the beginning. But it distinguishes carefully between the symbol and the reality which is conveyed through the symbol, between rest in or satisfaction with the symbol and the real growth of the spirit in its ascent towards God. Few, I think, of those who have studied Christian theology with sympathetic intelligence will deny that that has been its most consistent purpose, and its most general effect. The doctrine of grace for instance, especially in its association with sacramental symbols, is one which might easily yield to a merely miraculous interpretation or issue in conceptions of a merely magical effect. But the great theologians of the early Middle Age laboured, and on the whole with a high success, to save the doctrine from all such perversions. And they did so without relaxing for a moment

the full rigour of the Augustinian claim that God is beforehand with man in every moment of the process by which he is saved, that every least movement of man's desire for God and for the good is the result of a direct inspiration of God Himself. They brought that truth, which is, after all, the essential foundation-truth of all religion, into living relation with man's actual nature, his nature of desire, of will, of reason, of habit. They psychologised, if for the sake of brevity I may resort to a barbarism, Divine grace. It was for them the self-impartation of God to man, such action of God upon man as enabled him on the terms of his natural constitution to make the Divine Nature really and effectively his own. And further, mediæval theology carefully distinguished between this universal movement of God's free unmerited love towards man and the particular instances of it manifested for specific ends through sacramental symbols. The grace mediated through visible symbols was but a limited application of that universal grace which both motived and satisfied every least movement of the living will towards God.

My purpose in these lectures will be to recall

certain instances of this spiritualising activity of theology within the concrete framework of popular religion. Especially it will be my aim to show how at certain critical moments it laboured to preserve the most fully spiritual theory of the Christian Sacraments.

II

ST AUGUSTINE

We have seen that religion is both our apprehension of God and our communion with God as the Supreme Reality. We have seen also that we can never be satisfied with thinking of this apprehension or this communion as being merely, or even as being primarily, our own act. Just as the objects of sense first present themselves to us in order that we may apprehend them, so the invisible Reality is somehow beforehand with us in our apprehension of it. We feel that it is more true to the innermost truth of fact to say that God apprehends us and communicates with us than that we apprehend and communicate with Him. Or rather we feel that the latter truth has been made possible by the former. Now all apprehension of and communication with the invisible must be through symbols, either the immediate mental symbols which we call words, or those intermediately sensible symbols which we call

sacraments. The Christian religion is conceived concretely as God's revelation of Himself to us through Word and Sacraments, as the ministry of His Word and Sacraments to us through his Church.

The sacramental element in Christian worship existed from the beginning as a constituent part of the Divine Revelation. It was regarded indeed as the most directly personal apprehension of that Revelation. The Revealed Word was preached, and those who received it entered upon personal communion with it through the Sacrament of Baptism and renewed and fostered their communion with it through the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The earliest Christian accounts of the Sacraments are purely descriptive. That is no doubt largely because they were written by apologists, whose object was to exhibit to the non-Christian world their simple and natural symbolism of spiritual relations between man and God. But it was also because their real nature as an element in worship had not as yet begun to be a matter for careful theological discussion. They were simply taken for granted as an integral part of the Christian tradition. It was not deemed necessary to

discuss even the nature of their symbolism. Such elementary distinctions as that of the "sacramentum" and "res," the actual symbol and the spiritual gift conveyed through the symbol, had hardly as yet emerged. For the most part conscious attention was concentrated only on the spiritual gift. Baptism *was* spiritual illumination, the Eucharist spiritual nourishment. The symbols used were just taken for granted, as associated with a particular spiritual endowment. There was, too, at first an abundance and spontaneity of symbolism which was very soon reduced, no doubt principally at the dictates and in the interests of a theological purism. Perhaps our best authority for the forms of worship prevalent in Rome and its neighbourhood at the beginning of the third century is the so-called Egyptian Church Order which Dom Connolly of Downside and Professor Schwartz of Strassburg, working independently, showed some twelve years ago to be the lost *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, whose date is round about A.D. 230. Now the chief value of this early document is to be found in the striking differences between the practice to which it bears witness and that witnessed to by documents clearly derived from it, but dat-

ing something like a century later. The earlier practice is of a kind largely unfamiliar to us, while with the later we should find ourselves generally quite at home. And although we cannot in all cases trace the exact reasons for the change, it needs but a little historical imagination to see in it the effect of a more careful and restrained theological treatment of the doctrine involved. Let me take a single instance to show what I mean. It was customary for the newly-baptized to receive communion at the earliest possible moment after emerging from the laver of regeneration. But there was a further custom referred to by Tertullian, and almost in the same terms by St Jerome, nearly two centuries later—the custom of presenting to those who had just emerged from the water of baptism a cup of mingled milk and honey as a foretaste of the eucharistic meal. (St Jerome, however, we notice, introduces a note of protest which Tertullian would have found quite unnecessary, when he speaks of it as one of the customs traditionally observed in the churches which have arrogated to themselves the authority of the written law.) The symbolism here is obvious enough. Those

who had just passed through Jordan had thereby entered into their inheritance of the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And it was appropriate that they should immediately receive the first-fruits of their inheritance. Now the document usually known as the Egyptian Church Order describes in detail the communion of the newly-baptized. And there we find that the offerings made upon the altar consist of bread, a cup of water, a cup of mixed milk and honey, and a cup of wine, that each of these is blessed by the ministering presbyter, and that each in turn is administered to the communicants in the order in which I have named them. It is unnecessary to insist how unfamiliar is the atmosphere in which we here find ourselves, an atmosphere which does not become more familiar as we listen to the words with which each is delivered. For the bread the formula is—"The Heavenly Bread in Christ Jesus," and for the cups of water and of milk and honey and for the wine the formula becomes simply—"In God the Father Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church," repeated as each is delivered. Now in a document of something like a century later, but obviously derived from

the earlier Order, we still find traces of this strange rite, but so modified as to remove most of the effects of strangeness for us. The milk and honey (there is no mention of the water) are now to be received after the reception of the Eucharistic elements, but there is no longer provision for their offering on the altar or for their blessing along with the elements by the Bishop or Presbyter. A century later still, when it has been expressly forbidden by one of the so-called Apostolic Canons to present honey or milk (among a list of other forbidden offerings) upon the altar, the custom again appears in a modified and chastened form. One of the Canons of the Third Council of Carthage (A.D. 397) forbids anything to be offered in the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood except bread, and wine mixed with water. It adds, however, that an exception is to be made on that one most solemn day in the year on which the newly-baptized are first admitted to the mysteries. On that day milk and honey are still to be offered, but they are to have their own special benediction so that they may be distinguished from the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

I have dwelt on this instance, perhaps at

inordinate length, in order to show how fluid early sacramental custom was, how obstinately it resisted the attempts of authority to give it both greater simplicity and greater fixity, and how evidently those attempts were dictated by a scrupulous regard for the data of Revelation. For, little as we can see as yet in the way of careful discussion of the nature of Sacraments, it is evident that these decisions of authority were motived by a desire to keep as close as possible, so far as Eucharistic practice was concerned, to the acts and words of our Lord at the Last Supper. Theology was already aiming in the measure of its power to keep Christian worship true to its source in Revelation.

Yet it must be confessed that the theological treatment of Sacraments throughout the whole patristic period remains scanty in amount, occasional and incidental in character, and very often, in appearance at least, self-contradictory even in the same author. What we must look for in these authors is not the particular form which their sacramental teaching assumed in obedience to the requirements of some particular occasion of controversy, but rather what fundamental religious principles governed their teaching as a whole. It is true of course, now

as then, that the stress of controversy is often that which elicits governing principles on one side and on the other. But it is also true that quite as often it can obscure their real character or confuse their real bearing. At any rate the further we get from any controversy which has sharply divided men of good-will, the more likely are we to recognise the measure of truth which was really being contended for on one side or the other.

Now I have chosen here to speak of St Augustine because from just this point of view he was the most influential and representative theologian that Christianity has ever produced. His sacramental teaching is as occasional as that of his contemporaries, or of his immediate predecessors and successors. But it was conceived within the ambit of a theology of singular depth and penetration inspired by a religious life of singular intensity. This is what distinguishes him from men who, like Cyril of Alexandria for instance, might easily be accounted greater, certainly more acute, theologians. Indeed, I would say that it distinguishes him from the whole tribe of Greek theologians. They are dealing even at their very best with the God of philosophy. St

Augustine is dealing personally with an exceedingly personal God. It is that fact that governs his whole theology, that made him the great theologian of grace, the theologian of the religious life of man rather than of a philosophically religious conception of the universe. It was not that the philosophy of the Greek Fathers was to him a foreign country of the mind. He was shaped intellectually by the same Neoplatonism as they, as all his early writings abundantly testify. But that intensity of personal religion which was his gave it an entirely new colour. And even if his doctrine of grace assumed its uncompromising clearness in the stress of a controversy which occupied only the closing years of his life, it was implicit in all his thinking from the moment of his conversion onwards. I say this because St Augustine's actual sacramental teaching dates most of it from quite another controversy, that with the Donatists, which occupied the middle years of his life. And much of its actual content, as for instance the distinction between the validity and the efficacy of sacraments, was due to the exigencies of that controversy. He spoke and taught there as the great ecclesiastic that he was. But the deeper note of his sacra-

mental teaching was, as it seems to me, struck from those discords of his inner life which later resolved themselves in the majestic harmony of his doctrine of grace. All his theology was profoundly personal. To understand it in its massive central assumption, and in all the detailed self-contradictions which that assumption perforce involves, it is necessary to read the riddle of a soul. No one can hope to read aright the riddle of a soul so great, but we can at any rate make the attempt. And he at least has done his best to help us. In threading the labyrinth of the formal treatises of the theologian we have ever at our side the living Augustine of the Confessions as guide.

I have purposely used the word "assumption" in thinking of that central nucleus of the Augustinian theology—the doctrine of grace. For though in his later writings it becomes the sole burden of his teaching, in his earlier ones it has hardly as yet grown conscious of its own importance. But it is there none the less, determining the bearing of every detail of his system, indeed constraining those details almost against his will into a system. Now the essence of the doctrine of grace can be put very simply.

It is that man is at most an instrument in his own salvation. He had done nothing, because he is incapable of doing anything, to originate it. It is in its origin, in its process, in its development, the free act of God. Man has done nothing and can do nothing even to deserve it. Augustine is careful to leave man in terms his free-will, to insist in set terms upon its reality. But it is difficult to discover where he has left room for it in our ordinary acceptation of its meaning. Even when man accepts the free gift of God, it is in virtue of a power which God gives him for the purpose, *ad hoc* as we might say. If man's will is free, it is because it has become free through the action of grace. Man's will is either enslaved to sin or enslaved to God. The former case represents the hopeless slavery of man's fallen state, the latter his perfect freedom. "Servitia Dei, hominum libertas"—"Cui servire est regnare." It is the first of St Augustine's great theological paradoxes, rooted in the paradox of religion itself.

Now from this root doctrine sprang Augustine's conception of the Church. The Church is the City of God, the mystic ark of salvation which God Himself has built. In it His elect

voyage with safety over the waters of destruction towards the haven of eternity. It is the visible society of His chosen. If it were not a visible concrete society here in the world of appearances, how could it represent and effectuate the purposes of God's free grace? All other societies of the human world are voluntary associations of men for particular purposes. Their frontiers are fixed by the limits of voluntary adhesion to them. But the Church is the eternal act of God's free grace visibly selecting, incorporating, nourishing His own. Yet there are many within who are really without, many without who are really within. The body of the Church is not coterminous with the action of its soul. It is the second of Augustine's paradoxes. No one did more than he to establish the reality of the visible Church as the authentic home of grace, as a society founded and administered by God's act alone. Yet in the end that visible Church was only instrumental, could be nothing more than an instrument, even though Divine. Beyond it was the invisible Church in which alone lay the ultimate fulfilment of God's redeeming purpose.

So the Church was an instrument, primarily

a revealing instrument. God's grace came forth to men primarily as a self-revelation. Now that self-revelation of God was *to men,* to creatures whose apprehension was determined ultimately by sense. It was therefore necessarily a revelation through symbols. But when we speak of symbols as an instrument of Revelation, we must be clear as to what that implies. It means that God is actually present in the symbols, is actually revealing Himself through them, and revealing Himself not simply as an object of knowledge, as something to be known about, but as a power to be vitally apprehended, to be known as we know in a close and intimate human friendship. The symbol might be a concrete object of the outer world which existed in and for itself, which had, too, significance in and for itself. But as an instrument of God's self-revelation its independent character was ignored. All attention was fixed on the fact that God was revealing Himself through it, and revealing Himself as Spirit, as a personal power of influence in the lives to which He thus revealed Himself. The symbol was, in short, God's chosen means of self-communication to man. It is not perhaps strange that, since the symbol was so regarded,

the distinction between the symbol in itself and the power which was acting through it was at first so little insisted on. It was, naturally enough, just taken for granted. But in Augustine we have the clear distinction between the "sacramentum" and the "res," between the symbol and the reality conveyed through it. It was the first step in the elaboration of sacramental theory, no doubt already required in the interests of a fully spiritual conception of the Sacraments. At a time when it was customary for the faithful to take with them to their homes from each Sunday celebration a portion of the consecrated Bread—Dom Connolly gives it as his opinion that the Wine also was taken—to be eaten every morning of the ensuing week before partaking of any other food, and when the express purpose of this reservation was to guard against the effects of poison in their ordinary food, it is not difficult to see the tendency to a magical view and use of the Sacraments already beginning to manifest itself. I am not suggesting that the particular distinction to which I have referred was designed to arrest this tendency. But everything which helped to concentrate attention on the spiritual reality of the Sacrament,

on its *res*, would necessarily in some degree have that effect.

Let me return, however, to St Augustine's general theory. That theory requires a momentary backward glance upon history. All revelation of God is through His Word, His Logos. Rather it is His self-revelation as the Word. The lives of the patriarchs therefore were so many theophanies. It was Christ who appeared in Adam, Seth, Enoch, Abraham, and the prophets before He Himself took flesh. The historical Incarnation of Jesus Christ is but the fulfilment of a Revelation which had never been intermitted throughout the course of history. And just as the special theophanies had been self-communications of God through the word "by divers portions," so the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was the integral self-communication of that same Word to men in the completed dispensation of grace. Now for St Augustine human words, the universal symbols of the human reason, are the most natural medium through which the Divine Word can communicate itself to man, can convey to man not only a knowledge of God's nature but the authentic feeling of its power. And the Sacraments are only an acted word.

Through the Word and Sacraments, therefore, the actual human words of Scripture and the prescribed sacramental acts, God the Word is reaching men in saving and healing power. This assimilation of the Word and Sacraments, this conception of Sacraments as a particular form of the Divine Word, is most characteristic of St Augustine's mind. And it may help us to understand the better some peculiarities of his sacramental teaching. First, there is the fact that St Augustine sometimes used language which seems to imply, to minds habituated to later distinctions, that the Eucharistic Bread and Wine are themselves transformed by the act of consecration into the Body and Blood of Christ, so that the worthy and the unworthy alike receive them, while at other times he insists that it is only by faith that they can be received. Now I have said already that the question involved here is one which had hardly yet arisen for discussion. St Gregory of Nyssa's treatment of it is the one considerable exception I know. And in the absence of such discussion, as I have also tried to indicate, the most natural way to speak of the Eucharistic elements for Christians who were concerned only with their reality, was the Lord's Body

and Blood. But in St Augustine's case, at any rate, there is something more which has to be considered. His habit of allegorizing, which we naturally enough regard as the most arbitrary fantasy, was really grounded in his general world-view. He thought of all natural objects as Divine symbols in the sense that they had a meaning in the mind of God, which was of course their real meaning, other than that which they had in our minds. He did not, of course, mean to deny all reality to the meaning things had for us. Only it was not their deepest meaning, their absolute reality. Now in Holy Scripture the names of natural objects were not just counters, but on the contrary the true coin of the Divine speech. Naturally those names had there their true meaning, which it was the business of our spiritually illuminated understanding to discover. Hence animals, plants, precious stones, above all numbers, meant in Holy Scripture what they meant to God and could only mean to us by His special illumination. Indeed, St Augustine had persuaded himself that the Scriptures approved themselves as the Word of God just by reason of this difficulty which they presented to the natural intelligence. So bread

and wine might actually mean to God what they were to us as the chosen medium of His self-communication.

A second instance of the close connection in St Augustine's mind of the Word and Sacraments as means of grace, *i.e.* of God's free self-communication to us, is his insistence that the Sacraments, like the Word, could only be received through the spiritual understanding. "The Lord said that He is the bread which cometh down from heaven, exhorting us to believe in Him. For to believe in Him is to eat the living bread. He who believes eats; he is invisibly fed because he is invisibly reborn." "We to-day receive visible food; but the Sacrament is one thing, the virtue of the Sacrament is another." "Who is it," again he asks, "that eats of the bread which comes down from heaven so that he shall not die?" And his answer is: "He who eats that which pertains to the virtue of the Sacrament, not that which pertains to the visible sacrament; who eats within, not without; he who eats in the heart, not he who presses with the teeth." These are typical examples of his teaching, and they all tend to show that he conceives of the Sacraments as being given and received on

exactly the same terms as the Word, that they are both given by the Divine Word or Reason, that they are both received by that exercise of the illuminated understanding which he calls faith.

One further point of St Augustine's Eucharistic teaching I must touch on very lightly in conclusion. It is too beautiful a conception to be omitted altogether. It bears us upward into that region of intellectual mysticism which was the natural atmosphere of his spirit. May I choose some words of his own to present it to you? "If you wish to understand the body of Christ, hear the Apostle speaking to the faithful, 'Now ye are the body and members of Christ.' If you then are the body and members of Christ, your mystery is laid on the table of the Lord, your mystery you receive. To that which you are you answer 'Amen,' and in answering you assent. For you hear the words, The Body of Christ; and you answer 'Amen.' Be a member of the Body of Christ, that the Amen may be true. Wherefore then in the bread? Let us assert nothing of our own here; let us listen to the reiterated teaching of the Apostle, who when he spoke of this Sacrament said, 'We who are

many are one bread, one body'—understand and rejoice; unity, truth, goodness, love." The conception is too sublime for comment. But do you not now feel in what a high, but by no means rarefied, spiritual air both the visible Church and the visible Sacrament were conceived by this heart of fire as they thus melt into each other, and become one reality in that unity of faithful spirits which is achieved only as they are held together in the indissoluble bond of the Divine Love?

III

HUGH AND RICHARD OF ST VICTOR

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries are the golden age of Christian theology. In the widest and noblest sense of the term they rationalised Revelation. Their one conscious aim was to establish its complete reasonableness. But in giving effect to that purpose they unconsciously did something more. They humanised Revelation. There is a certain intellectual dryness and aridity about the later Greek Fathers which repels us. Their philosophising somehow does not get near enough to life, seems not even to feel the need of such nearness. It is a reproach which cannot, certainly, be directed against the great Latin Fathers, say St Augustine or St Gregory. Their human feeling is abundant. For a human need is the very centre of their system, the sole nerve and motive of Divine Revelation as conceived by them. And from St Augustine especially mediæval theology drew all its sap

and vigour, its substance and its special quality. The influence of Aristotle upon the Christian thinkers of the thirteenth century may have modified but did not arrest the profound action of the Augustinian tradition upon Christian theology in the West.

In this lecture and that which will immediately succeed it I propose to consider sacramental doctrine in the completed form given to it by the early Middle Age. To think of the twelfth century at all is to recall the three famous Victorines—Adam, Hugo, and Richard. In the eighth year of that century William of Champeaux, a distinguished theologian of the Cathedral School of Paris, founded, along with a few devoted disciples, a rival school at the ruined chapel of St Victor, on the left bank of the Seine. Among those pupils was Reinhard, afterwards Bishop of Halberstadt in Saxony—a fact which was large with destiny for the future of the newly-founded school. The disciples of William formed themselves into a monastic house after the rule of the Augustinian Canons, and after the appointment of William to the See of Chalons in 1112 were presided over by the great Abbot Gilduin till his death in the year 1155. It was in the year 1115 that

Reinhard of Halberstadt persuaded his nephew Hugo, then a young man of twenty, to leave his Saxon monastery and become a member of the new Parisian House. There both the ripeness of his learning and the depth and sincerity of his devotional life speedily marked him out as the natural head of the school which he and his pupil Richard were to make as famous by their theology as another pupil, Adam, by his hymns. These three—Hugh the Saxon, Richard the Scotsman, and Adam the Breton—are inseparably joined together in the grateful memory of Christendom. Of the three only Hugh—I think we may use henceforward the English form of his name—wrote a professed treatment of the Sacraments. But I have coupled with his name that of his closest friend and pupil, the Scotsman Richard, for a special reason. Both Hugh and Richard were among the greatest masters of the contemplative life that Christendom has ever produced. Indeed, it may be said that neither wrote on any other subject or had any other purpose than to commend that life as the most perfect form of human life and to illustrate its reason and method. Now it may well seem strange to the reader of Richard's in-

numerable treatises, all variations on the same theme, to find not even the most incidental reference to the Sacraments. The reason, however, I think, is on reflection obvious enough. For him, as for his master Hugh, the contemplative life was itself the supreme expression of the sacramental view of life. Whether the theologian treated of the Sacraments *ex professo* and in detail or not, in dealing with the contemplative life, he was necessarily exhibiting the sacramental idea, and that in its widest range and its most concrete spiritual action. And Richard may have thought such detailed treatments the more unnecessary that his master had so abundantly satisfied its requirements. At any rate we may be sure that in pondering the words of Hugh on this matter we are entering into the mind of both.

Now the mental background of both these thinkers is that universal symbolism of the created order to which I have already referred as held by St Augustine. But with the later writers it takes a more systematic form. As it is in Hugh's elaborate treatise *De Sacramentis* that the view is most carefully systematised, we may henceforth confine our attention to his

treatment of it. That treatment is both logical and historical. Man comes first in the logical order because the world was created for man. This is a position which, for Hugh as for his contemporaries, is axiomatic and does not need any further discussion. But in what respect and with what limitation can and must it be asserted that the universe was made for man? For man himself is a creature of twofold nature, body and spirit. Primarily then the world was made for man's body, as his body was made to be the servant of spirit and his spirit was made for the service of God. But though the world was created primarily for man's body, and though its relation to his body is real, *i.e.* has a real instrumentality to it which man cannot afford to overlook, which indeed it is his duty to explore, yet it has relation also to his spirit in that it is the veil of a deeper reality which is continually breaking through. The world is a system of symbols of this deeper reality. Besides its obvious utilitarian value for man's body, it has this deeper significance for his spirit which it is his supreme duty to master in the measure of his power. The performance of this duty is the contemplative life. It consists just in such discipline

both of body and spirit as will gradually prepare the spiritual intelligence to pierce through the symbol to the eternal reality contained in it and conveyed through it. I may say in passing that those words "contained in" and "conveyed through," which so naturally occur to one in describing the function of the natural symbol, claim to be remembered because of their later use—a use which was as it seems to me inevitable—in describing the relation between the sacrament and its reality, between the outward symbol and the inward grace. The Tridentine Council in its affirmation, "quod sacramenta gratiam conferunt quam continent," that the Sacraments bestow the grace which they contain, was merely repeating with a verbal accuracy the hallowed phrase of theologians from Hugh onwards through St Bonaventura and St Thomas. And when we come to consider, as we shall have to do in a later lecture, the wide differences of opinion which divided and still divide theologians, beginning with these two Doctors, the Seraphic and the Angelic, on what is called the causality of sacramental grace, we might well be surprised at their unanimity in the use of this expression, were we not in possession of Hugh's general principle that all

created things are symbols containing a reality other and greater than themselves, and actually conveying that reality to lives "spent training for the sight." With that conception in view —and it was and is that conception which lay and lies behind all sacramental theory—it is difficult to see what exception can justly be taken to the use of the formula, or indeed what more natural and appropriate one could have been devised.

So much for the logical order of the conceptions which determine Hugh's justification of the Sacraments. Still more important, however, is his historical treatment of his theme. Perhaps, indeed, it is the mere fact of his historical treatment, the fact that he cannot be satisfied with a view of sacraments which would make them a mere historical interlude, that is the most important feature of his teaching about them. We might be surprised, and perhaps irritated, by a treatise on the Christian Sacraments to-day which devoted half its space to their history from the beginning of the world to the Incarnation of the Word. We are not, of course, likely to have any occasion for such surprise or irritation. But Hugh would have considered any treatment of sacra-

ments as an integral part of the economy of the Incarnation as left hopelessly in the air without such historical preparation. For him sacraments, the actual sacraments of the Christian dispensation, are but instances of God's universal method of care and restoration for man, his diseased and fallen child. Indeed, before they needed to become the medicines of his diseased state, the "medicamenta morbi," they were the natural food of his healthy life. Even if man never had fallen, it was only through expressive symbols that he could have perfected his knowledge of God. Granted that before the Fall he had a clear intellectual conception of God, that his intellect, unclouded by sin, attained more easily to the reality through the symbol, yet there would have been room for even further spiritual growth in that unfallen state. And such growth could only have meant a surer penetration through symbol to reality, a surer apprehension of reality by means of symbols. Man, however, did fall, his spiritual intelligence was obscured; he subjected himself to what were the mere symbols of a good beyond them as themselves the good of his own choice. So far from reading their secret, he forgot or tended to forget that they

contained a secret to be read. Yet was he never left in this utterly hopeless blindness. No sooner had he fallen than God's restoring love, the *amor reparativus Dei,* flowed forth towards Him. He could never find satisfaction in his self-subjection to the created symbol as a sufficient good. He was haunted by an inner division from which he could not escape, and did not want to escape save on terms of obedience to the higher good he had so wantonly denied. And even if he now found it impossible to find the reality through the symbol everywhere, yet he found also that at those points at which he importunately sought to penetrate the symbolic veil the Reality seemed to meet him with comfort and benediction. Through a long history man thus sought God through all sorts of oblations and sacrifices, and found Him there authentically, if obscurely, as the God of grace, *Deus reparativus.* To this period succeeded the covenant relation with Abraham in which circumcision took the place of the earlier pagan sacrifices as the seal of God's redemptive presence and operation, just as to circumcision succeeded baptism under the perfected dispensation of grace through the Incarnate Word. But here I would let Hugh

speak for himself—"From the beginning, with the onward course of time, and as the Advent of the Saviour drew nearer and nearer, the effect of salvation increased, and the knowledge of the truth grew from more to more. Fitting was it therefore that the symbols of salvation should themselves be varied one after another according to the succession of the times in order that the effect of Divine grace might increase unto salvation, and also that the meaning itself latent in the visible things themselves might evidently appear. And therefore it was ordained that the Sacrament of expiation and justification should take form first through offerings, afterwards through circumcision, and finally through the baptismal washing. For it is the same cleansing whose form and similitude are found obscurely indeed in the offering, are expressed with increasing clearness in circumcision, but in baptism are more manifestly declared." "Those sacraments," he adds, "of the first age (*i.e.* of the time which preceded the covenant with Abraham) were as it were the shadow of truth, those of the middle period (*i.e.* the Jewish law) its image or figure, those of the last (*i.e.*, the dispensation of grace) the very body of truth

itself." There are two points to which, at the risk of an iteration which may seem unnecessary after so clear a statement, I would yet draw attention. The first is that it is the same restorative Divine grace which is administered with increasing effect, and through ever more appropriate and significant symbols, throughout the history of fallen and spiritually needy humanity. For Hugh sacraments began with the beginnings of man's need, with that loss of intellectual vision wrought by the Fall by reason of which the general spiritual symbolism of the created order was hid from man's sight. And the second is that Hugh always conceives of the redemptive work of the Divine grace as not only a "medicamentum morbi," a healing medicine for man's diseased state, but also as an enlightenment, an illumination of his mind by which he may regain the power of perceiving the reality through the symbol. In other words, one effect of the particular Sacrament is to restore increasingly the sacramental perception of reality everywhere, the real presence or presence of the Real through all natural symbols. It is not only the "effect of salvation," the saving effect, but the "knowledge of truth" that the sacramental system,

operative from the beginning, has procured, and was intended by the Divine institution to procure, increasingly. Here we are reminded of Augustine's favourite assimilation of the Word and Sacraments in their purpose and effects. And we shall have occasion presently to notice its importance for the sacramental conceptions of Hugh and his successors in another connection.

I have dwelt so much and so long on the background of Hugh's sacramental teaching that it might almost appear as if I were suggesting that for him all religious symbols were sacraments and that all natural symbols ought, but for our spiritual blindness, to be religious symbols, and therefore sacramental. And indeed that is not far from his actual teaching. Yet he knows how necessary it is to distinguish between possible and actual sacraments, between the universal symbols through which the enlightened and disciplined human spirit might perceive the Divine Reality, and these particular symbols which God Himself has appointed as means of its enlightenment and discipline. He therefore finds insufficient the then accepted definition of a sacrament as *signum rei sacrae,* the symbol of a sacred reality. The letters of

the sacred text and the pictures of holy things are such symbols, and yet they are not sacraments. He proposes to define a sacrament more adequately as "the corporeal or material element sensibly set forth representing in virtue of its likeness, signifying in virtue of its institution, and containing in virtue of its consecration (ex sanctificatione) some invisible and spiritual grace." We may linger for a moment on this definition both because it was very generally accepted by the later Schoolmen—the Seraphic Doctor takes it over wholesale and carefully draws out its implications—and also because it is a further key to the conceptions which governed Hugh's sacramental theory. In the first place Hugh, like Augustine, is careful to distinguish the *sacramentum* and the *res*. The external and material, he tells us, is the sacrament; the invisible and spiritual is its reality or virtue. Now the external element is chosen because of some natural resemblance to the spiritual reality which it can therefore adequately represent. This likeness or similitude is, as I have said, natural, *i.e.* it belongs to the nature of the material symbol, which nature, of course, it derived from its Divine creation. Here we have Hugh's general view of all natural

objects as symbolic of an eternal reality. But that representative character of the objects of sense, their similitude to the corresponding reality, is not always apparent to us. Our eyes are holden. One consequence of the Fall is that it has dimmed our vision, that it has induced that spiritual blindness which is the only real ignorance. The appropriate sign therefore, the sign which has natural similitude with some aspect of Reality, needs to be specially instituted or ordained by God in His purpose of redemption in order that we may be taught its true significance. Just as the natural similitude is an expression and effect of the creative mind of God, so the express choice and ordination of that similitude that it may be a means of opening our eyes to its true significance is the act of God the Redeemer, an act by which He seeks to recover us from our fallen state into that wholeness of life which we had lost. Here again, you see, the function of the Sacrament, of the Divinely appointed symbol, is to teach, to unfilm the spiritual eye so that it may perceive true meanings. But further, the material object charged with its natural, God-created similitude, and Divinely appointed as a means of

concentrating our dimmed vision upon the true meaning inherent there, must now be sanctified, *i.e.* set apart by certain words and acts as the vehicle of the reality which in fact, in the mind of God, it has contained from the beginning, but which now by this act of sanctification or consecration it contains also for us. This is the act of the minister of the Sacrament as delegate both of the Divine Will of redemption, and of the faith of the community in that will.

This, then, is what according to Hugh constitutes a sacrament. It is and remains an outer symbol, a creature of the material order. But it now contains, and can convey to the faithful, that reality which only the will separated from God has hitherto prevented us from seeing in it and through it. Sacraments then are the normal instruments of the economy of the Incarnation, of the dispensation of grace, *i.e.* of the free unmerited love of God coming forth to the help of man's spiritual impotence and to recover him from that impotence. And if we would now consider more closely their purpose and effect, we must take more exact account of the disabling effects of the Fall. They may be embraced under two heads.

ignorance and concupiscence. Negatively they are an impotence to see the true Reality, to desire the good which exists alone in that Reality. Positively they are the delusive acceptance of the appearance as truth, the degrading subjection to the appearance as good. It is from that twofold impotence and that twofold delusion that the economy of grace was divinely designed to rescue man. And it is therefore the purpose of the Sacraments as instruments of that economy to chasten, to illuminate, and to discipline the erring spirit of man. Here, again, Hugh had found the formula which the later Schoolmen adopted and conscientiously—an unfriendly critic might say too ingeniously—explored. Ingenuity indeed there is, but it is the ingenuity of minds honestly facing and trying to appraise facts. The Schoolmen could not be content with the inclusive formula that the Sacraments conferred grace. They wanted to record with all the sincerity of which they were capable the actual effects of that grace in their own experience. They were before and beyond everything else experimental theologians. That is their supreme distinction. If the spirit of system crept in and became a hampering obsession, it was only in the deca-

dence of Scholasticism. And even then it was often nobly corrected by what everyone must recognize as genuine insight, as truth issuing from self-knowledge.

But in Hugh, at any rate, none of the weaknesses of mere system appear. His account of the effect of sacraments is necessarily coloured by that contemplative life within which his own spirit habitually moved and dwelt, but it is just on that account the more actual and convincing. And what he felt was that they were by their variety and repetition—those of them *i.e.* that could be repeated—a discipline of the spirit, that discipline which above all things else the spirit needed. Then too they were a chastening of the spirit. They humbled its pride. When perhaps it presumptuously thought to ascend to God by an easy flight, they brought it back to earth and compelled it by a divine decree to accept the ministry of humblest things as the means of its approach to the ineffable majesty. In this strange sense of the spiritual humiliation involved in the very reception of the Sacraments as material things, so characteristic of all mediæval treatment of them, may we not see the resistance to a temptation of which we may hardly be aware,

but which must have been continually present to the adepts of the contemplative life? But above all the purpose and effect of the Sacraments is to teach us, to dissipate that fog of ignorance with which the Fall has wrapped the spiritual intelligence around.

As we have already seen, *significatio* was specially attached to *institutio*. The Divine choice and appointment (institutio) of the naturally representative sign had as its special object the disclosure of true meaning (significatio), the vision of Reality through the sign. And how strictly intellectual that vision was, by how careful and thorough an intellectual discipline it had to be prepared for, in the minds of Hugh and Richard, no one who has read even a single treatise taken at random of one or the other will be allowed to forget.

In my first lecture I said that it would be my aim to show what theology had done for the full spiritualisation of religious practice. I doubt whether in the long history of Christian theology a better example of such influence could be found than Hugh of St Victor's *De Sacramentis*. He set the common Christian rites—remember he had not as yet defined the number of those rites which had a just claim

to the title of sacraments—in a universal framework. He exposed them as particular examples of the spiritual symbolism of which the world was compact, or rather which the world by its very constitution was. He traced their history from the creation until the end of time. He exhibited not only their general harmony with man's need, but the actual method of their medicinal action upon the actual diseases from which man suffered. Above all, he insisted continually that in and through their symbolism a personal intercourse was being maintained, a personal communion was being established and confirmed. God was in and through them graciously coming to man, revealing Himself in the personal renewing influence we call grace. In and through them man was continually renewing that faith without which he could not see God. And because they were the ordinary ministers of this personal relation man could never afford to despise the Sacraments, could never on his eternal peril treat them as unnecessary to his salvation. Yet, with that verbal contradiction in which religion revels, in virtue of its very nature as the experience of God, Hugh breaks out in his next sentence—"But God can save

without them. For those who under the natural law possessed the substance of the sacrament in right faith and charity did not to their damnation lack the sacrament. Dost thou tell me that he who has not the sacraments of God cannot be saved? I tell thee that he who has the virtue of the sacraments of God cannot perish. Which is greater, the sacrament or the virtue of the sacrament—water or faith? If thou wouldst speak truly, answer 'faith.'"

IV

ST THOMAS AQUINAS

The thirteenth century is from one point of view but a close continuation of the twelfth. From another it is so wholly different from it as to mark the beginning of a new theological era. The difference is largely one of method only, but it is in some degree also a difference of spirit and temper. For the change of method the Master of the Sentences is primarily responsible. Peter, usually called the Lombard from the country of his birth, belongs to the early half of the twelfth century, and was, therefore, the contemporary of Abelard and Hugh of St Victor. He died as Bishop of Paris in 1164. His *Four Books of the Sentences,* i.e. of the opinions of the chief Fathers and Doctors of the Church on all the great questions of theology arranged in their logical order, speedily became and remained even as late as the sixteenth century the basis of all theological discussion and investigation. During

four centuries every theologian won his theological spurs as a conscientious commentator on the Books of the Sentences. In spite of the commanding authority which St Thomas had acquired in the Schools even during his own lifetime, it was not till the era of the great Spanish theologians of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that his *Summa* displaced the *Sentences* as the recognised textbook of Christian theology.

Now to indicate the new method popularised by the Master of the Sentences I will select two points, first the logical systematisation of the subject matter of theology, and secondly the method of discussion of this matter in detail. For the first the logical basis is found in Augustine's distinction between *res* and *signa,* the realities and the symbols which conduce to man's salvation. The realities are naturally considered first, both because of their absolute character and because of their logical priority. Their elucidation occupies the first three books of the *Sentences.* The signs or sacraments are the subject of the Fourth Book. Another distinction borrowed from St Augustine is utilised for the logical division and sequence of the realities themselves. Augustine

distinguishes all reality, all real things, into those which we enjoy and those which we use, *i.e.* into those in which our ultimate satisfaction consists and those whose only value for us is that they may be the means of our reaching that satisfaction. Now the only reality which we can enjoy, in which we can ultimately rest as our satisfaction, as the fulfilment of the deepest needs of our being, is God. "Our heart is restless until it finds rest in Thee." The realities which we use as a means to that fruition or ultimate enjoyment of God are the created order, the Incarnation, and grace. The Creation, as we have already seen in Hugh, was for man's sake, for the sake of his body that it might become an instrument of his spirit, but immediately for the sake of his spirit also in that it (the creation) was but the diverse and differentiated expression of the all-inclusive perfection of the Divine Nature. Man's spirit, however, having lost that clearness of vision in virtue of which it could see in creation the manifoldness of the Divine Perfection, through the Incarnation God's love that would not be denied (*the amor reparativus Dei*), restored to man the power of intellectual, *i.e.* fully spiritual, vision which he had by his own

failure forfeited. From the Incarnation again issued the economy of grace, of God's personal touch with man's personal spirit in the totality of its action and at every detailed point of its need. These three, then, the Creation, the Incarnation, Grace, are the realities which man uses in order to reach that ultimate satisfaction in God for which he was made and which his nature even in its corrupted state still demands. When these realities have been adequately set forth (God as the only Reality of fruition or enjoyment and the other three as the realities created by His love for our use as a means to that fruition), then the symbols or sacraments of that inclusive reality can be appropriately dealt with. This, therefore, became the logical order of systematic theology from the Master of the Sentences onwards. Let us look, for instance, at a brief theological treatise of the next century, one of the hundred books which the massive learning and fine judgment of the great Lord Acton chose as most fully representative of the evolution of human thought throughout the ages, the *Breviloquium* of St Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor. It consists of seven parts, each issuing from its predecessor with a logical necessity which is a delight to

the mind as it is a stimulus and a satisfaction to the appetite of the seeking spirit. Here is the order: the first of God as Trinity, the second of the Creation, the third of the corruption wrought by sin, the fourth of the Incarnation of the Word, the fifth of the grace of the Holy Spirit, the sixth of the medicine of the Sacraments, while the seventh is a kind of epilogue on the last judgment.

Perhaps I have dwelt overlong on this systematic character of the new theology of the twelfth century. I will try to be more brief in indicating its second characteristic, its method of treatment of each particular question arising for discussion. Here Peter Lombard followed the example which had been set by his Master Peter Abelard in his "Sic et Non" (Yes and No). Abelard's method was to state briefly and usually in a challenging form the matter to be discussed, and then range the authorities for and against in two serried files. There, with what looks like a cold irony, he leaves them in unresolved antagonism. Peter Lombard adopted his master's custom of citing contrarient authorities on each theme, but abandoning his cold aloofness attempts in each case either a reconciliation of the opposing

views, or a reasoned defence of the validity of one or the other opinion. He did in short for theology what his contemporary Gratian was at the same moment accomplishing for Canon Law in his *Concordia Discordantium* or Harmony of Conflicting Authorities. The *Decretum* and the *Sentences,* in their respective spheres, fixed the method of theological discussion which has ever since been followed in the Roman Schools, and is still followed at this hour.

One more word as to the method of the *Sentences* and we shall be prepared for that completed development of it by St Thomas which is our immediate concern. Each book is divided into a number of *Distinctions,* each distinction dealing with a separate aspect of the general subject of the book and being itself subdivided into a certain number of questions. Thus of the Fourth Book which, as I have said, deals with the Sacraments, the first four Distinctions are these: (1) Of sacraments and sacramental signs; (2) of the sacraments of the new law; (3) what baptism is; (4) that some receive the sacrament and the reality, some the sacrament and not the reality, and some the reality and not the sacra-

ment. And here are some of the questions under the First Distinction: What a sacrament is, of the reason of the institution of sacraments, of the difference between the sacraments of the old law and the new, of circumcision, of the institution and reason of circumcision, why circumcision was changed into baptism, etc. Now St Thomas, like every other theologian of his day, conscientiously commentated the *Sentences,* distinction by distinction and question by question. But in his two Summæ, and especially in the Summa Theologica, he developed this method with a rigour and precision which it had not before attained. He followed, in the main, the logical order of the subject-matter of theology as I have already described it—God, the Creation, the Fall, Grace. The one notable exception is that his treatment of the Incarnation follows that of Grace and of the virtues which owe their existence to it, and immediately precedes that of the Sacraments. The reason for this departure is St Thomas's strongly-held opinion that grace was necessary to man even in his unfallen state. Grace therefore precedes both in the logical and the historical order the Incarnation of the Word. But

apart altogether from this question of order what distinguishes him from all his predecessors and successors alike is the immense fulness and amplitude of his discussions, and his impressive intellectual honesty and thoroughness. The Summa is divided into three parts, the second of which is again subdivided into two, so that all references are made to it as Prima (the first part); Prima Secundæ (the first subdivision of the second part); Secunda Secundæ (its second subdivision), and Tertia (the third part). *Prima* contains the doctrines of God and of Creation, the latter including one of the, philosophically, most important elements of all Thomas's theology, the place of angels or separated substances (*i.e.* pure incorporeal spirits) in the hierarchy of being. *Prima Secundæ* deals with the Fall and Grace, *Secunda Secundæ* with the virtues and vices, his beautiful treatment of prayer and worship appearing here as a component part of justice, what justice requires man's attitude to God to be. Finally, *Tertia* deals with the Incarnation and the Sacraments. Each part, the Secunda ranking of course as two, consists of a certain number of questions continuously numbered throughout—Secunda Secundæ, the longest

part, having as many as 189 questions. Each question again is divided into a certain number of articles. Thus Part III., Question 62, deals with grace as the principal effect of sacraments, and is divided into six articles, which discuss the following questions: "Whether sacraments are a cause of grace," "Whether sacramental grace adds anything to ordinary grace (the grace of what are technically known as the virtues and gifts)," "Whether the sacraments of the new law contain grace," "Whether there is any virtue in the sacraments causative of grace," "Whether the sacraments of the new law derive their virtue from the passion of Christ," and "Whether the sacraments of the old law caused grace." Each article is discussed in exactly the same fashion. First a number of objections to the implied contention of the article are stated by St Thomas with great clearness and force and supported by quotations from Scripture or the Fathers. Then these objections are countered by some brief quotation, usually from Scripture, which Thomas uses as a kind of text on which to build up his positive argument. And then, finally, each objection is dealt with in turn in the light of this *Responsio* and its groundless-

ness exposed. Some of the most powerful and valuable instances of Thomas's reasoning are to be found in these answers to objections.

I have dealt at such length with this question of method because it is important in two ways, first in its effect upon us, and secondly in its effect upon the Schoolmen themselves. We find ourselves in an entirely different atmosphere from that to which we had grown accustomed in our commerce with the Fathers, or even with theologians like the Victorines. They were, at any rate as compared with the Schoolmen, poet-theologians, dealing with their theme in an atmosphere of rapt imagination. The Schoolmen are severe intellectualists, trying to see everything in the dry clear air of reason. They, on the other hand, treated their patristic authorities as the rationalists they were themselves, and so in some measure deformed their teaching and misrepresented the nature of their authority. This must be my apology for making so much of the revolution in mere method which the thirteenth century inaugurated.

But I must say something also about the difference of spirit and temper which characterised the new theology. The older theo-

logians were deeply under the spell of Plato. That is the reason of their being, as I have said, so largely poet-theologians. Now all the chief modern students of St Thomas, Sertillanges and Gilson in France, the late Mr Philip Wicksteed and Professor Taylor here, have contended that in spite of his Aristotelianism there was in the deepest recesses of the Angelic Doctor's mind a large Platonic remainder. I believe that that plea is necessary and just and that it cannot be too strongly urged home. The Platonic influence had so entered into the substance of Christian theology that it could not be dislodged from it. Yet is is equally true that Thomas was in conscious revolt against it, and examined its claims as they arose with a watchful suspicion. His firm and decisive rejection of the value of intuition as a ground of belief in the Divine existence is an instance in point.

This preamble has been long, but it is a preparation not only for what remains of this lecture but also for the whole of the next. And I have felt that it was a necessary one if I were to make at all clear what seems to me the differentia, the distinguishing feature, not only of St Thomas's sacramental teaching, but

of that of the Schoolmen generally. And to mark our crossing of the border we shall have to leave behind, almost for good, that word with which we had grown so familiar in the patristic conception of sacraments, "symbolism." It cannot altogether, perhaps, be dropped, for it has entered too deeply into the Christian system as a whole. But for purposes of the technical discussion of sacraments it is of little further use to us. There we shall have for the future to familiarise ourselves with the word "instrumentality." The Sacraments are instruments, instruments of the redemptive Divine Will. That will be the burden of St Thomas's teaching. The *significatio* indeed on which Hugh of St Victor had so strenuously insisted, the teaching value of the Sacraments as of the word, will not altogether disappear. It will in set terms be reaffirmed on occasion, since it has become and will remain part of the consecrated formula which defines the nature of a sacrament. But the idea of symbol with which it is so closely connected seems to the scholastic mind too loose to serve the purposes of exact discussion and distinction. Henceforward a sacrament will be thought of less as a symbol which allows some aspect of Reality

to break through than as the Divinely-appointed instrument of some saving operation of Divine grace.

Rigorous intellectualist as St Thomas was and remained, he here definitely removed the stress from the revealing word and laid it on the redemptive will. He did so, I think, chiefly because his pure thinking was governed so much by Aristotle's conception of God as the First Mover Himself unmoved. Now movement is the very principle of created life, and therefore almost inevitably St Thomas conceived of the created order as primarily a vast system of instrumentality through which the Divine Author of movement accomplished the integral purpose of His will, and especially His will of redemption for man. He did not indeed forget or ignore the function of the universe as a revelation of the Divine perfection. No one insists more than he that all aspects of the Divine Perfection were revealed in the manifold variety of created forms. Yet it is clear that in his mind the idea of instrumentality took precedence of the idea of revelation.

Now the conception of instrument as applied to the Sacraments seems at first sight both less

adequate and more dangerous than that of symbols. Especially is that the case when we remember the now consecrated phrase, "The sacraments contain grace." Let us see how sedulously St Thomas seeks to avoid such dangers. In the first place, the Sacraments are instruments of a particular kind. A man's hand or arm is the instrument of his will. So is the axe in the hand of the carpenter. But it is the man himself, the living movement of his will, that is throughout the principal agent in whatever is wrought by the hand or the axe. Neither works its effect save as moved by the power which resides in the special purpose and intention of man. Thus the hand and the axe are both instruments of a power other than themselves, but they are not instruments of the same kind. The hand is of a higher instrumental order than the axe. For the former is a part of the total living organism informed by the man's will, which is the sole principal cause of whatever is wrought by its means, while the latter is an instrument shaped by man for a special purpose. The former is an *instrumentum conjunctum,* an instrument in closest living connection with the principal cause; the latter an *instrumentum separatum,*

an instrument separate from the principal cause and operative only as externally moved by it.

Now God is the sole principal and efficient cause of grace. But He uses also certain instrumental causes, the meritorious sufferings of Christ and the Sacraments. The *Passio Christi,* the suffering of the Divine Humanity, is an *instrumentum conjunctum.* It derives its virtue, *i.e.* its merit and saving power, from the living association of Christ's humanity with His divinity. As God, Jesus Christ is the principal cause of grace. As man suffering unto death, He is only the instrumental cause. The Sacraments are also instrumental causes, but it is as separated instruments designed and appointed by God for that special purpose that they have their efficacy. It is clear that throughout St Thomas is jealously concerned to preserve, on the one hand, the conception of the Sacraments as efficacious signs of grace; on the other, the conception of grace as never anything less than God's self-communication to the soul.

That we may see how completely this notion of instrumentality governs St Thomas's treatment of the Sacraments, let us consider one or two detailed points of his sacramental teaching.

We have seen that sacraments had long been considered as somehow a cause of grace and as containing grace. Now so long as the notion of symbolism was dominant, there was little difficulty in conceiving of a sacrament as somehow a cause of grace. As the symbol pointed to a certain effect, it was almost inevitable that it should be thought and spoken of as the cause of that effect. But for the exact thinking which the Schoolmen demanded this assimilation of roles—cause and sign—presented real difficulties. The Sacrament is admittedly a sign. Now the only real correspondence of a sign is with the effect to which it points. It is difficult to see therefore how the sign of an effect can also be its cause. Again, nothing which is material or corporeal can produce a spiritual effect (a commonplace of mediæval thought). But the subject of grace is the mind of man, which is a spiritual thing. Therefore the Sacraments cannot cause grace. Further, that which is the *proprium,* the peculiar privilege, of God ought not to be ascribed to any creature. But to cause grace belongs to God only. Therefore sacraments which consist of words and created things cannot, it would seem, cause grace. To the first of these objections—

that the same thing cannot be both a cause and a sign—St Thomas replies that it is quite true that the principal cause of any effect, even if it is visibly manifest, cannot properly be called also its sign. But a merely instrumental cause, if it is thus manifest, can be the sign of that invisible effect which it procures as an instrument in the hand of the principal agent. Just because, therefore, the Sacraments are merely instruments in God's hand, they can be both signs and causes, "efficacia signa." They instrumentally effect that which they represent, "Efficiunt quod figurant."

To the second objection—that corporeal things cannot produce spiritual effects—the answer runs on the same lines. An instrument has two kinds of action, one in virtue of the will which uses it and proceeding entirely from that will, the other in virtue of its own special quality of power. An axe, for instance, obeys the will of the carpenter and gives effect to the design which exists only in his mind, but its does so in virtue of its own special quality of sharp-edgedness. So the Sacraments as corporeal things affect the body only in virtue of what they themselves are, but as instruments of the Divine Will effect the spiritual purposes

of that Will. In cleansing the body according to its own virtue the water of baptism is also an instrument of the Divine virtue to cleanse the soul.

To the third objection, viz., that what belongs solely to God—viz., the causing of grace—ought not to be ascribed to any creature, St Thomas replies briefly by saying that it is true that God alone is the source and cause of grace, but that the Sacraments in His hands, and moved solely by His Will, may be rightly called its instrumental causes.

Again it has become an accepted formula that "the sacraments contain grace." Hugh of St Victor had called them "vessels of grace." The objections to the formula are obvious. Grace cannot be contained in the Sacraments as in its subject. For the subject of grace is the spirit and not anything corporeal, as the Sacraments are. Neither can it be contained in them as in a vessel, because a vessel is a localised portion of space and grace does not exist in a place. Besides, the spiritual is not contained by the corporeal, even when the former is in the latter. It is, for instance, more true to say that the soul contains the body in which it is than that the body contains the soul.

Nothing, I think, can be more interesting for the light it throws on St Thomas's wholly spiritual view of the Sacraments than his answer to these objections. It is quite true, he says, that grace is not contained in the Sacraments as in its subject, the spirit in which it acts, or as in a vessel regarded as a certain place (prout quidam locus). But the word *vas* does not only mean a vessel. It means also an implement of any kind, as in Ezekiel ix. 1, a weapon of destruction is called *vas interfectionis*. And it is in this instrumental sense that the Sacraments are called "vessels of grace." Further, the virtue of the instrument, being a virtue derived from the principal agent which uses it, exists in the instrument only in a transient and incomplete mode of being. Now when the spiritual exists perfectly in any corporeal substance, as, for instance, the human soul in its body, it is more true to say that it contains the corporeal than that the corporeal contains it. But since grace exists in the Sacraments only as in the instruments through which it passes, it may, not unsuitably, be said that they contain grace.

I have had time only for a very few illustrations of St Thomas's use of the conception of

instrumentality in his sacramental teaching. But I hope they may have been sufficient to show how jealously in its use he aimed at preserving and enforcing the fully spiritual nature of the relations between God and man, between spirit and spirit, which the Sacraments were conceived of as a means of certifying and fostering.

V

LATER SCHOLASTIC DISCUSSION

In trying to appraise the value of any theological discussion it is necessary to have clearly in mind the exact circumstances out of which it arose. Now I have been contending in these lectures that Christian theology, at least in the persons of its chief representatives, has always sought to preserve the fullest spiritual value of popular religious belief and practice. But in doing so it has had to follow with all possible respect and sympathy the actual developments of such belief and practice. And these developments have in turn been determined by modes of expression which were due to the theologians themselves. We have seen something of the nature and effect of this process in the case of the Sacraments. The symbolic character of the Sacraments as media of Divine gifts led naturally to their being thought of and described in terms of the gift which they were believed to convey. For

the believer the symbol was naturally almost forgotten in his experience of the Reality which revealed itself in him. The first duty, therefore, of theology was to define more exactly the nature of a sacrament by distinguishing between the *sacramentum* and the *res*. But this distinction made almost inevitable the use of such expressions as that the Sacraments convey grace, that they contain grace, and, finally, that they cause grace. Their instrumental character is gradually emerging to the practical supersession of their character as symbols. These new expressions have their natural effect upon popular belief, which does not scrutinise too closely the exact import of terms. Instrumentality is a conception which, however guarded, lends itself readily to mechanical views. An instrument when used produces its appropriate effect upon the matter on which it is used. It alone is active, the matter passively receives the particular effects of its action. St Thomas therefore developed a complete theory of instrumentality which might be sufficient to guard against and arrest the crude tendencies of popular belief. But in doing so he had also to safeguard the character of the Sacraments as real and really

effective Divine instruments against theologians whose main anxiety was to stress the requirement of faith in those who received the sacramental gift. It is this double necessity which is apparent in all the later discussion of the Sacraments as causes of grace.

But before detailing the history of this discussion, and by way of preparing for it, it may be well to consider the bearing upon sacramental doctrine of one or two other terms which had gradually forced themselves into common theological use. Of these perhaps the most important is the definition of the mode in which the Sacraments confer grace as "ex opere operato." The definition is first tentatively used by Peter of Poitiers, who died at the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the year 1205; and it is significant, as pointing to that precedence in time of popular to theological use on which I have just been insisting, that he qualifies his use of the phrase by an "as it is wont to be said" (ut dici solet). Very soon, however, the phrase was to obtain a universal theological currency. It meant that the Sacraments, by the use of the consecrating acts and words which made them Sacraments, were charged with the Divine

grace of which they had thus become instruments, and immediately conveyed that grace to the faithful receiver. It was not, of course, supposed that the grace which the Sacraments conferred could be received without faith on the part of the recipient. That faith was absolutely necessary to the reception of grace, but it did not create or merely evoke the grace which it received. The intention obviously was to mark the reality of the Divine gift, the fact that God was beforehand with all human faith in making the gift, that He Himself had come and was present in the Sacrament, offering Himself to the needs of men. The Sacrament was in its very accomplishment that gift coming to man's need, whatever his dispositions might be. Only when that character had been assured to it was it necessary to insist upon the indispensableness of certain dispositions on man's part to the effectual reception of the offered gift. But they were indispensable. Faith at least, and even a faith informed by charity, could alone receive the full virtue of the Sacraments. In the due balancing of these opposite claims there was, of course, room for what looks like ambiguity, and even self-contradiction. And

when the logic of one claim or the other was pressed home, it was apparently to the sacrifice of its rival. But mediæval theology was an elaborate and honest, if by the very nature of the case a not always successful, attempt to do justice to both.

So then the phrase "ex opere operato" came to be universally accepted. But it had in reality done little to solve the difficulties with which a theologian anxious to safeguard the immediate contact of spirit with spirit in the Sacraments was faced. Grace was so essentially such a spiritual relation that its relation to material acts and things created difficulties which have not yet been solved. It was soon seen that the phrases which had become accepted and familiar—the Sacraments *convey* and *contain* and *cause* grace, and they do so *ex opere operato*—instead of answering questions only raised them. St. Bonaventura, for instance, had written in the *Breviloquium*: "The sacraments contain within themselves the healing truth and grace which they present, and in presenting confer what they promise." Yet it was the same Bonaventura who was the founder of the theory of the sacramental causality of grace known as Occasionalism. The Sacraments, this

theory held, were but the occasions upon which God immediately bestowed the particular graces which He had promised through them, and without which He did not bestow them. They were indeed causes of grace, but only causes *sine quibus non*. Their due performance procured that God should forthwith impart Himself in grace. It was impossible to conceive that outward words and acts, things of the material order, should of themselves convey a gift so exalted and personal. St Thomas reacted vgorously against this theory and its implications. According to him, and it is difficult to resist the soundness of his criticisim, the Sacraments were on this showing nothing more than conventional signs. They ceased altogether to be effectual signs—and *efficacia signa* was another of the terms which had fixed itself firmly in the vocabulary of theological definition. Still more did this theory deny altogether to the Sacraments the character of causes of grace. Causes which were only indispensable occasions were not causes at all in any adequate sense of that word. It must be that the sacramental act had some real spiritual effect if it were to have any right to retain the character of causality. But Thomas shared the

same predispositions as Bonaventura. He, too, felt the difficulty of ascribing Divine grace in its essential quality as a self-communication of God to man to anything which belonged to the physical order. And, therefore, he taught that the Sacraments as it were prepared the soul for the reception of grace. What they conferred was not grace itself—that was God's personal and immediate act—but a certain adornment and enrichment of the soul in virtue of which it merited, *i.e.* became able and worthy to receive that which was God's immediate gift to it. In order to understand more clearly what St Thomas meant by this *ornatus* or adornment of the soul, we may turn for a moment to consider the use of another sacramental idea of the mediæval theologians. Grace was a much wider thing than sacramental grace. Sacramental grace was but a particular form of that larger reality, just as grace itself was but one of God's points of contact with the created order. St Thomas's conception of the contacts of God with the created order is so important for the understanding of his theology as a whole that I will ask your forgiveness if I interrupt myself here to give a brief account of it. God, says St Thomas, touches

the created order in three ways. In the first He is perpetually and universally present to it in such wise that if He withdrew His presence from it or from any portion of it for a single moment, it or that portion would have dropped out of the scale of being, would have simply ceased to be. This contact, however, involves no active response on the part of the created order. It is passively obedient to, or receptive of, that presence which, notwithstanding, is His presence in the fulness of His essence and power. For He is in every fragment of the created universe not merely as a distant and transmitted effect, but *in essentia, in potentia, in præsentia.* Above this kind of contact is His contact with human spirits in grace, a contact in which His innermost nature as the Absolute Truth and the Supreme Good is communicated to men, and so communicated that they no longer merely passively receive but actively respond to those His perfections. This contact, therefore, is an active spiritual communion in the highest good between God and the subjects of His grace. Its effects are an insatiable desire for God as absolute Truth and Goodness. The third stage of God's contact with the created order is the Incarnation, in which He

has achieved, in some fashion which transcends all rational apprehension, perfect oneness of being with it. But what is most interesting and important in St Thomas's account of these stages of the Divine contact with the created order is that not only is each inferior stage necessary as a preparation for that above it, but also that each superior stage takes up into itself and permanently requires the contributions of those below it. Grace includes nature, and could not have effect if it did not include it. The Incarnation includes grace and nature and would be impossible without them. It reminds us not a little of modern theories of emergent evolution as applied to the stages of matter, life, and mind.

From this digression I return to St Thomas's treatment of sacramental grace. The Sacraments in general, and each Sacrament in particular, were designed and instituted by God to convey to us some special gift of His grace. Now in certain Sacraments, viz. baptism, confirmation, and orders, the gift consists of a certain indelible stamp or seal set upon the soul, what St Thomas calls a character. At first sight this may look like magic. But on closer inspection we shall find that St Thomas

knows exactly what he is saying and why he says it, and that in the measure of his power he is trying to convey what is the exact grace which we should expect God to give through these Sacraments if we believe He does use them to convey a gift, and is at the same time guarding against the intrusion of any magical idea in connection with them. Now the purpose of Sacraments, according to St Thomas, is twofold. They were meant as a remedy against sin through grace, and to provide for the rites of Divine worship as ministerial to the Christian life. Orders have obviously the latter intention only, since those who receive them receive them that they may hand on to others the things which pertain to worship, and especially the Sacraments. So, too, baptism is called the "gate of sacraments," because only those who have received it are capable of receiving the other Sacraments. In a certain manner, as St Thomas puts it, this is true of confirmation also. Further, both baptism and confirmation are preparations for the Christian warfare. What we may expect from them, therefore, is a constant direction given to the active capacities of the soul (the *potentiæ animæ*). Now it is to this constant direction, this habitual bent of the

will, that we give the name of character. It is not a stamp or seal magically impressed upon the soul's substance or essence, but the seal of the soul's constant effort and direction. So, too, in the case of Orders the active powers of the soul have been sealed and pledged to the special ministry of the Christian rites.

And so after a long circuit I come back to the *ornatus* or adornment of the soul, which, according to St Thomas, is the spiritual effect of those Sacraments which do not impress an indelible character. In their case, too, the *ornatus* is something like a character, though not indelible. It is a disposition of the soul to the reception of grace which God will give in virtue of that disposition. So in reply to Bonaventura Thomas established what has been known ever since as the physical causality of the Sacraments, *i.e.* their causality in virtue of the acts and words of the physical order which constitute them Sacraments. But what they thus caused, St Thomas held, was not grace itself, but an enabling disposition to receive grace. Now two reflections must inevitably occur to us in connection with this discussion. How was it possible for those who had accepted the phrase *ex opere operato* to stop short of at

least St Thomas's doctrine of physical causality? And why should St Thomas himself hesitate to claim grace itself as the spiritual effect of the Sacraments, seeing that what he did claim as its effect was certainly something spiritual, an actual enrichment of the spirit's power? To both these questions the answer lies in the difficulty which the Middle Age found, when it got right down to the bottom of its thought, in conceding a directly Divine operation such as grace to anything which belonged to the physical order. Grace and nature were connected, as St Thomas nobly contended, but they were connected within the ambit of the Divine mind and purpose. Yet they were different orders, the natural and the supernatural, and for us to try to connect them further than was just necessary in obedience to the requirements of Revelation itself was an unpardonable temerity.

The contest thus waged between the two great doctors of the thirteenth century was piously perpetuated amongst their followers. The term Occasionalism, indeed, was silently dropped by the later Franciscan theologians, but the doctrine covered by the term persisted among them. Duns Scotus, Pierre d'Ailly,

Richard of Middleton, even a Dominican like Durand de St Pourçain, unhesitatingly reaffirm it. The Dominican doctors, on the other hand, remain true to the theory of physical causality as St Thomas had taught it. It was only in the sixteenth century that fresh ground was broken on both sides, and from that century only the rival theories which still divide the Roman Schools date. The modern theories of physical and moral causality are, of course, developments of the earlier Thomist and Scotist theories which I have outlined, and follow closely the earlier lines of division. Cardinal Cajetan, one of the most intelligent and independent commentators of St Thomas, was the first to abandon the great Master's view that the effect of the Sacraments was a disposition entitling to grace or, as it came afterwards to be called briefly, a title to grace, and to assert their full physical causality of grace itself. The Thomists now generally ranged themselves after him, but by far the greatest of the defenders of physical causality was the great Jesuit theologian Suarez, who was stoutly opposed in this matter by another member of that order, his younger contemporary Vasquez. Notwithstanding the weighty

authority of these two great names, Cajetan and Suarez, the physical theory could not and did not hold its own. The rabid logic of minor theologians pushed it to conclusions which revolted by their grossness even the more moderate Thomists themselves; so that the theory of moral causality can now claim in its support both the greater number of theologians and the weightier names. It was Melchior Cano in the sixteenth century who first stated the traditional Scotist doctrine in a form which was entirely free from any suspicion of occasionalism, and among its later supporters none were more illustrious than the two Jesuit theologians, Vasquez and de Lugo.

This theory is so important by its long-continued and apparently increasing authority among theologians, and so germane, as I think, to the contention of these lectures, that I must try briefly to indicate its general character. Let us see first of all what is the central question in any theory of sacramental causality of grace, for it is now conceded on both sides that grace, rather than a mere title to it, is in some manner the effect of the Sacraments. The question then is—What exactly is it that the consecrating act of the minister of the Sacraments

has effected? Now up to a certain point the adherents of both the rival theories answer that question in exactly the same way. They both assert that the minister of the Sacraments is an instrumental cause of the virtue of the Sacrament because his use of the consecrating words and acts converts the merely representative sign into the appointed instrument of the redemptive Divine Will. But at this point agreement ends. One says—The matter is now simple and straightforward. We are agreed that the consecrating words and acts are only an instrument in the hand of God. But they *are* such an instrument, and simply by being used (*physice*) they have instrumentally caused grace. The matter is not so simple, say the others. The acts of the minister, in so far as they are just such acts, are his own, but in so far as they are sacramental, *i.e.* in so far as they elicit in the signs the full sacramental virtue, they are not his, but Christ's. The Sacraments, then, according to this theory, are vicarious operations (acts and words) of Christ the Redeemer which He accomplishes through ministers clothed with His authority as a means of applying the fruits of His passion to the needs of individual souls. And because Sacra-

ments are such vicarious acts of Christ, they are causes of grace not physically, but morally, not in consequence of the instrumental virtue of the mere act, but in consequence of the higher instrumental virtue of the sufferings of Christ. For, as you will remember, St Thomas too had made the sufferings of the Divine Humanity an instrument only of grace, but an instrument organically united to God Himself, an *instrumentum conjunctum*. The strength of the moral causality theory, religiously, is that it thus preserves both the instrumental character of the Sacrament and its instrumentality through an act of the redeeming Divine Nature. Its weakness, which is only after all a logical weakness, is that it seems to leave very little room for any instrumentality in the Sacrament considered simply as *instrumentum separatum*. That at any rate is the weakness which the supporters of the rival theory have alleged against it. But I cannot see that even logically the weakness is a serious one when we remember that all theologians were agreed—how could they help being agreed on such a point?—that the Sacraments, as separate instruments, derived all their virtue from the Passion of Christ. How

can that truth be better expressed than by saying that Christ Himself is the real minister of every sacrament using the visible acts and audible words of an earthly minister appointed to that end?

But speculation on a matter of so great moment has not been exhausted even by the discussion of four centuries. A new theory of sacramental causality has been put forward in our own day by the most considerable of modern Roman theologians—Père Billot of the Roman College of the Jesuits, and until lately Cardinal. Billot has gone back to St Thomas and revived his view of the effect of the Sacraments as not grace, but a title exigent of grace. But that title to grace, that disposition of the soul which enables it to receive grace, he holds that the Sacraments produce neither physically nor morally, but in a manner that he calls imperatively (*imperative*). The word will hardly convey much meaning until we learn that he has gone back behind St Thomas's conception of the Sacraments as instruments to the older conception of them as signs. They are what he calls practical signs. They manifest the Divine intention to confer certain benefits, and by doing so they produce the disposition

towards grace which God will answer. To ascribe to them any other causality is to forget their character as signs.

The atmosphere in which we have moved during these last two lectures may have seemed sometimes thin and half-exhausted compared with the electric thrill of the air breathed by the Fathers, and even by precursors of the Middle Age like the Victorines, and breathed forth by them still upon us. Yet behind all the rigour and sometimes, perhaps, aridity of their strictly logical reasoning I feel, and I hope I may have helped you to feel, the passionate earnestness of religious souls striving to preserve the fully spiritual value of definitions which might easily have yielded, and sometimes were allowed to yield, to a less worthy interpretation. That generous purpose is at least fully evident until, with the rise of the new disciplines of critical history and critical philosophy, to say nothing of the modern physical and biological sciences, scholasticism as a system of unchallenged intellectual authority came to an end at the close of the seventeenth century.

VI

SACRAMENTS AND THE MODERN MIND

THROUGHOUT these lectures I have been speaking of the Christian Sacraments from the historical, not the dogmatic, point of view. But I have made no attempt, even within the narrow limits prescribed by such a course as this, to include within my survey all that is important in sacramental doctrine. I have purposely confined myself to such a use of the history of that doctrine as might best illustrate its influence in correcting the tendency to magical conceptions from which sacramental practice is never wholly free. And as the Sacraments have always been conceived of as means of grace, which is a purely spiritual relation, I have concentrated attention on the discussion of the one question—How can sacraments, as things of the material order, be associated with a spiritual effect? We have seen that that association has been accounted

for through the two ideas of symbolism and instrumentality. Both ideas, no doubt, co-existed in the minds of theologians from the beginning. Otherwise such expressions as "the sacraments are a cause of grace and contain grace" could not have become general long before their implications began to be fully thought out. But it is certain that the idea of symbolism seemed generally adequate till the time of St Thomas, while from his time onwards it has been, in the Latin Church, virtually superseded by that of instrumentality. In the Churches of the Reform instrumentality, as a mode of explanation, was practically dropped, while even symbolism was modified by a further stress upon the necessity, which had always been admitted, of faith to the effectual reception of the sacramental grace. It was alleged by the theological opponents of the Reformers that their exaggerated stress upon the necessity of faith made the virtue of the Sacraments so dependent upon faith as to be virtually created by it. That the great Reformed Churches retained infant baptism and vehemently repudiated the sectaries who rejected it ought, I think, to be sufficient proof that this was not, at least, their intention.

But it can hardly be denied that the Reformed doctrine did tend in an increasing measure to leave the impression upon the minds of its adherents that the sole virtue of the Sacraments was due to the faith of those who received it or, in the case of the baptism of infants, of the Church on their behalf.

I think, therefore, it may be well, before coming to the present state of opinion about the Sacraments among ourselves, to consider, with the same historical detachment and sympathy which I have tried to preserve hitherto, the real nature and motives of the Reformed doctrine. If the Reformers laid so much stress in their sacramental teaching upon the importance of faith, it was because of the prerogative rôle which they assigned to faith in the total economy of the religious life. As with St Paul and St Augustine, this exaltation of faith was in the case of Luther also the expression and outcome of an intensely personal religious experience. But, as also in their case, it led to an extreme statement of the doctrine to which the experience pointed. "Justification by faith only," came, as we know, to be the watchword of practically all Reformed theology. Now it is well to remember that this was only

a return to Augustinian conceptions behind all the careful distinctions of Scholastic theology. Theologically, the Scholastic doctrine was much less crude, much more careful to take account of all the human factors in the reception of the Divine gifts, than the Augustinian or Lutheran. Religiously, the Augustinian and the Lutheran were, if I may put it so, more immediate. They were nearer to the actual religious experience as such. But both Augustine and the Schoolmen in the last resort stood for exactly the same truth, viz.—that God was beforehand with us in every form and degree of the experience which we call religious. If faith was the first movement of man towards God, it was God Himself who inspired that movement. In St Thomas's carefully balanced system free will is hardly more real than with St Augustine, and the "servum arbitrium" of Luther is but a more positive way of affirming what is implicit in both, viz.—that without God we cannot make any the least movement towards Him. It was only in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that the Molinists and Jesuits in the Roman Church, and the Arminians in the Reformed, made the part played by man's free will in his religious life more real. If,

therefore, faith justified, it was in virtue of its being God's act in man, not man's originating and unaided act. And just in proportion as we really believed it to be God's act must we believe it to be infallible in its effects. From it all obedience to the Divine Will, all good works, must inevitably issue. It was the sheer logic of religion divorced from human psychology, and so could not bear the strain of man's ordinary experience.

The faith, then, that was necessary to the effectual reception of the Sacraments was but a single instance and expression of the faith which was necessary to the whole religious life, and had the same origin and character. But as it was God speaking to us directly through His Word that worked in us that original justifying faith, it was inevitable that every other incitement to that faith should seem subsidiary. Hence it was that the Reformers definitely elevated the Word above the Sacraments and used them only, or at least chiefly, because the Word had enjoined their use. So all the questions which, as we have seen, arose in the Roman Schools as to the exact effect of the acts and words of consecration were for the Reformed theologians

quite otiose. All that could be said was that the Sacraments were means of grace, announcing, like the Word, the Gospel of the atoning act of the infinite Divine Compassion, and thereby evoking the faith which justified. When the Roman theologians maintained that the Reformers regarded the use of the traditional formulæ accompanying the sacramental acts by the minister of the Sacraments as but another method of preaching the Word and not as consecrating the material elements at all, as *concionatoria,* not *consecratoria,* they were not far from the truth. And it is probable that the earlier Reformed theologians at any rate would hardly have thought it worth while to rebut the charge.

Thus throughout the Reformed Churches sacramental doctrine was reduced to its simplest terms. The *sacramentum* itself, the outward and visible sign, was clearly distinguished from the *res sacramenti,* the inward and spiritual grace actually given through its instrumentality. Further, only those sacramental or symbolic rites which, by the clear witness of Holy Scripture could establish the claim to have been instituted by our Lord Himself, were admitted to the full status of Sacraments.

As this was held to be true of Baptism and the Lord's Supper only, the mystic seven were reduced to two. The sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist was regarded as simply commemorative. But the Communion of the faithful was invested with a special awe and solemnity, and was prepared for by a special fast and by a revival of the ancient custom of *exomologesis* or public confession and penitence by open sinners. In the Evangelical and Reformed Churches of the Continent, that is, the churches which owed their separate organisation to Luther and Calvin respectively, these customs continued with little change even throughout most of the eighteenth century. In the Lutheran or Evangelical Church the fact that at least a part of the Eucharistic office, celebrated at the altar in its traditional place and with the use of the traditional vestments, was the chief Sunday service preserved besides some semblance of its sacrificial character. In our own Communion the rubrical requirement, that a part of the Holy Communion Office should follow upon the service of Matins or Morning Prayer on every Sunday of the year, had something of the same effect. Thus tradition was so far perpetuated, at least in the

Anglican and Lutheran Churches, as to make a full revival of sacramental ideas and practice in connection with the Eucharist possible. In our own Church that revival has covered now two generations. In the Lutheran Church it is principally, I think, during the present generation that it has become at all conspicuous.

Now this revival is but another instance of that precedence of popular demand in religion over well-ordered theological thought of which I have already spoken. It is true, of course, that the revival of sacramentalism among ourselves is due in largest measure to the Catholic Revival of the early and middle nineteenth century. And it certainly cannot be said of that Revival that it was wanting in a very definite and even learned theology. But the popular sacramentalism of to-day has followed it at a somewhat prolonged interval and seems to owe comparatively little to that theology. It is at least very generally among those of the younger generation who question the very foundations of that theology that the greatest attraction towards what we may loosely call a sacramental form of worship exists. And for this reason, if for no other, the need for fresh

developments in sacramental theory is pressing. That need some of our younger theologians are trying to meet. I need only mention the contributions of the Lady Margaret Professor at Oxford and the Master of Corpus, Cambridge, to the volume known as *Essays Catholic and Critical,* and the recently published discussion of *The Christian Sacraments,* by Canon Quick of Carlisle.

It must at first sight seem a strange fact that a very general revival of the sacramental idea should coincide so exactly with the criticism of the documents which gave it its authority in the Christian Church. But it must seem still more strange if it should prove to be the case that Biblical criticism and sacramental revival are associated as cause and effect. Yet I believe that that is largely true at any rate for the younger generation. And if it is true it points to a conception of Sacraments very far removed from the traditional conception of them in Christian theology. That conception rested ultimately and with a practical exclusiveness on Divine institution. Behind that institution indeed lay the general symbolism of spiritual realities which the religious sense detected in the created order—

what Hugh of St Victor called the representative character of the material elements. By their very nature certain things of the material order represented certain other spiritual effects. And religion had naturally utilised this general spiritual representativeness of the material order to set apart or consecrate, to place the seal of a special sacredness upon, the material objects which it used in its acts of worship. Thus, for instance, a special building was set apart with distinctive rites to be, and remain, God's house. All such rites, and the instinctive demand of religion was continually multiplying them, were regarded as sacramental. There was, therefore, the danger that the specially sacred rites instituted by our Lord Himself should be merged in this accumulating mass and lose that distinctive character which His institution gave them. Hugh of St Victor was the first to formulate a definition which would distinguish Sacraments in the fullest sense from this growing mass of "sacramentals." Peter Lombard first fixed the number of the rites which satisfied Hugh's definition at seven. What henceforth distinguished Sacraments proper was that they were representative symbols instituted by our Lord Himself in the

form and matter which His delegates were to use in setting them apart to their sacred use. If, then, the "sacramentals" had a kind of spontaneous origin in the instinctive symbolism of religion, the Sacraments proper, on the other hand, were due to the express act of Divine institution. If the reality of this act were ever called in question, it would seem as though the Sacraments must thereby cease to be. The Church indeed, as the Body of Christ organically united with Him as its Head, might be regarded as interpreting His mind if it were shown that the Sacraments referred to His personal institution had in fact developed in the course of its early history in obedience to its own religious needs. But that was a hypothesis which the theologians of an age which regarded the letter of Scripture as sacrosanct did not need, or at any rate thought they did not need. They were satisfied that there was sufficient Scriptural proof that each of the seven Sacraments was instituted by our Lord, though they admitted that in the case of some of them the form of consecration had not been fixed by Him but was left to the Church to determine. But they went further still in attaching the Sacraments exclusively to Divine

institution and denying their authority as dependent on any action of the Church regarded as the Body of Christ. In an earlier lecture I mentioned, in passing, St Augustine's distinction between the validity and the efficacy of Sacraments. This distinction was motived by the special circumstances of Augustine's controversy with the Donatists, but the great authority of his name made it a theological commonplace of later times. The point in dispute between the Donatists and the Catholics was whether the unworthiness of the minister of the Sacraments hindered their efficacy. The Donatists held that it did. How, they argued, could the minister convey that grace which he did not himself possess? The Catholics answered that, as the grace of the Sacraments was the gift of God, the unworthiness of the minister could not annul the gift. Augustine, of course, as a Catholic strongly held this view, but he also held the view that there was no salvation outside the Church. How could he reconcile these two beliefs, the belief that the duly accredited minister of the Sacraments remained such a minister even if he were cut off from the Church's communion and the belief that the Church was the sole home of

grace? St Augustine's attempt at such reconciliation can hardly seem to us either illuminating or convincing. It was that the Sacraments are always valid when duly administered, whether inside or outside the Church, but efficacious only when administered within. That is to say, when the words and acts of consecration are used by one who has been once duly appointed a minister of the Sacraments, the sacramental sign becomes forthwith a means of conveying to the recipient the Divine grace which in fact he does in all cases receive, but efficaciously only if he is within the communion of the Church. Heresy, like any other mortal sin, is an impediment to the effectual reception of God's actual gift. Now in this distinction between the validity and the efficacy of Sacraments we have a curious instance of the contradictions to which theology is often committed in attempting to reconcile positions which are really irreconcilable. On the one hand, the doctrine of the Church as the sole ark of salvation had to be respected. On the other, there had to be asserted the fact that our Lord alone instituted the Sacraments and that they exist in their full virtuality wherever the condi-

tions of that original institution are complied with.

Now modern New Testament criticism has caused a reasonable measure of doubt concerning this fact. In the case of Baptism the measure of that doubt is more serious, in the case of the Eucharist much less so. An Anglo-Catholic scholar of eminence, Dr. N. P. Williams, has stated with great candour and honesty the critical reasons for disbelief in the Dominical institution. But though he replies to the critical objections with much force and convincingness, he has to admit that a reasonable doubt remains which for many minds will be insuperable. We can no longer approach the question of the institution of the Sacraments in reliance upon the witness of a Divine and therefore inerrant Revelation which all our theological forbears took as assured. We may, therefore, have to fall back upon a Divine authority inherent in the Church in virtue of which it rightly interprets the mind of its Lord. I will not dwell here upon all the difficulties involved in such a strategic withdrawal. They must be obvious to every reflecting mind. Apart altogether from the difficulty, in the present long-standing divisions

of Christendom, of defining the Church so as to assure to each divided section the full right to inheritance of its past action as interpreter of the mind of Christ, there is the far more serious difficulty of justifying with any kind of conclusiveness to the reason the Divine character of the Church itself otherwise than as the last and inclusive term of an infallible Divine Revelation. Historical criticism is compelling theology to revise its doctrine of the Sacraments and its doctrine of the Church. But it cannot effectually revise either until it has reconsidered and restated the more fundamental doctrine of Revelation.

Meanwhile, however, there are certain indications of the modern attitude towards Sacraments of which the theologian can take definite account. First of all, that attitude is a frank return to symbolism in its widest range. That is one reason why the religious mind of to-day has on the whole accommodated itself so easily to the revolution wrought by one or two generations in the traditional view of Holy Scripture. It is not only, perhaps not chiefly, the world of external nature that the modern mind at its best finds symbolic of Reality. In all the ultimate reaches of human

thought it finds that same symbolism. We may use the logical process, and indeed we must use it, to reach the highest peaks of thought. But there thought has already become symbol, an imaginative vision of some more ultimate Reality. And religion, whether it follows the ordered processes of thought or trusts itself to a more immediate vision, is never satisfied till it holds some kind of authentic communion with Reality. So Holy Scripture appeals to us more now through its poetry than through its prose. We do not ask from it so much dogmatic formulas as poetic truth. And so the attempt to reduce it to dogmatic statement, as in the manner of the old sermon, no longer appeals. The modern type of sermon, on the other hand, seems often to have very little directly religious content or to have it in such dry and impoverished form as to be incapable of stirring deep religious emotion. But the Sacraments both appeal to and cultivate the sense of the symbolic and the emotions which accompany that sense. For certain natures, and among them some of the most deeply religious, the Sacraments have already superseded the preaching of the Word as the means of access to the religious life. Reality breaks

through as it were unfettered, not tied to and hampered by the halting interpretations of a human teacher. There is, of course, danger in this unlicensed symbolism, and it is a danger of which an at once intelligent and sympathetic theology will have to take account. But theology itself in doing its work will know itself to be symbolism of a higher and richer kind. The thin subtleties of the later Schoolmen would only repel the modern world. On the other hand, it could answer readily to the deep rich chords of truth which the greatest of the earlier Schoolmen and of the Fathers struck continually.

Another characteristic note of the modern attitude towards Sacraments is the feeling that they express for it more adequately than anything else the reality of the Church. For the modern religious mind at its best the Church is also a symbol, the greatest and most inclusive of all religious symbols. Through it breaks the immediate vision of God's perfected order, the Divine harmony of all existence. It is for this reason that many can take so lightly nowadays, too lightly as I think, the weakening of its old foundations in an infallible Divine Revelation, attested by prophecy and miracle.

They are content to accept the Church simply as a fact of history, because as such a fact it symbolises God's completed work in history. It is for them "the prophetic soul of the wide world dreaming," not merely "on things to come," but on the things that abidingly are. Its foundations are the general heart of man, his deepest religious need. And of the Church so conceived the Sacraments are the most natural and sufficient expression. They express its general symbolism in various special symbolisms. They express its universality by their universality, by the fact that they are everywhere the same symbols pointing to the same truths. And in the Eucharist especially, as St Augustine saw, they seem in a manner to create that universality. It is the Church, the Body of Christ, the souls and bodies of men united to Him, that is offered upon the altar and again received by the faithful as the true and only sufficient nourishment of their spirits. In its own supreme Sacrament Church and Sacrament are identified. Some such feeling does, it seems to me, express the nature of the mystery which many find in the Sacraments, even when they cannot or do not attempt to interpret it to themselves.

VII

THE DOCTRINE OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION

The doctrine of Transubstantiation, when duly considered in its true relations, seems to me a notable instance of the function claimed for theology in these lectures—that, namely, of chastening and correcting the excesses of popular devotion. The detailed treatment of a specifically Eucharistic doctrine seemed, however, definitely to transcend the scope of lectures purposely confined to a discussion of general sacramental theory. I propose, therefore, now in an additional chapter, to put forward some reasons for the view that this doctrine, especially in the fully developed treatment of it which we owe to Aquinas, had the intention and effect of qualifying the crudities of popular religious belief and practice.

Historically, Transubstantiation became the recognized doctrine of the Western Church, with the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council,

in the year 1215. But behind that decree lay nearly four centuries of discussion which determined the character and form of its statement. It was in the earlier half of the ninth century (A.D. 831) that a monk of Corbie, near Amiens, Paschasius Radbertus, published a treatise *On the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood* which aimed at giving precision to the somewhat indeterminate Eucharistic doctrine inherited from the Fathers. Two things were universally agreed upon in the belief of Christians whether popular or learned, viz., that the Body and Blood of Christ were *really* received in the Sacrament of the Altar, and that they were received by faith. But it was difficult to hold both these truths without an implicit subordination of the one to the other, a subordination which could easily pass into virtual suppression of one or the other. A Real Presence for faith tended to appear unreal if it were not first conceived of as a Presence independently of faith. On the other hand, the indispensable requirement of faith could easily come to mean the sole instrumentality of faith in evoking the Presence. In popular religion, with its instinctive habit of simplification, it is inevitable that this process should

be continued to its logical issue. The revived insistence, for instance, upon the necessary rôle of faith in all spiritual apprehension, which marked the theology of the Reform, speedily became in popular Reformed religion an exclusive insistence. It might almost be said that the uninstructed religious mind of Protestantism rapidly acquired a habit of conceiving of faith itself as creative of the Sacramental Presence. The opposite and parallel urgency towards simplification was at work during the Dark Ages, so that the Carolingian Renaissance of the ninth century found itself confronted with a popular mode of belief for which the Sacramental Presence of Christ was wholly independent of faith. It was believed, for instance, that an infidel, if he received the Sacrament, would eat the Body of the Lord. All the poetic imagery through which the awed reverence in the presence of an ineffable mystery had found expression in the Fathers was now reduced to a coarse and often revolting literalism.

This was the situation with which the theologians of that revival of learning which marked the age of Charlemagne had to deal. Paschasius was perhaps, after Alcuin, the

greatest of these theologians, a man of fine religious sensitiveness and an eager and intelligent student not only of the Latin but of the Greek Fathers as well. And to him we owe, as Harnack has so justly put it, the first great Christian monograph on the Eucharist. Now it is as inevitable that the religious beliefs which a theologian will set himself to interpret should be those which have a general prevalence in his own moment as that the forms of thought which he will use in their interpretation should be those of his own time. He may himself believe in the eternal fixity of dogma, as practically all Christian theologians did up till our own day. He may with the most absolute sincerity persuade himself that he is but reiterating the constant witness of tradition. None the less in quoting some utterance of past authority with the most absolute fidelity he is often giving it a meaning which it could not have had before, because he is applying it to modes of belief and worship which are in continual flux. By an instinct of which he is largely or even wholly unconscious he stresses those aspects of the traditional statement which apply to his own contemporary situation while practically suppressing those aspects which

have no such application. And he obeys this instinct the more readily because his principle of dogmatic fixity requires its existence and exercise. He assumes, because his principle requires him to do so, that the author he is quoting was dealing with exactly the same religious situation with which he is dealing now, and that, therefore, his statements, however apparently defective or redundant, must bear exactly the same interpretation which he finds it necessary now to give them.

Now it is probable that popular Eucharistic belief, the kind of belief, I mean, which expresses itself in the unreasoned attitude of the worshipper, was from a very early period, if not indeed from the earliest, practically the same. And the fact that this was largely the case for all such belief is the grain of truth which explains and in a measure justifies the obstinate conception of the fixity of tradition. But there is nothing more certain than that the popular Eucharistic belief of, say, St Augustine's time was able to bear a stress upon the faith-element in the constitution of the Sacramental Presence which by the time of Paschasius had become quite impossible. It was not only the ordinary worshipper but also the most instructed theologian who by

the middle of the ninth century felt that the Presence in the Eucharist was in some sense altogether independent of faith, that it was there beforehand for faith, never merely or even principally by faith. What was required of the theologian was a clear vindication of that Presence in its independent Reality. And that was just what Paschasius provided in his unhesitating contention that the elements of bread and wine were changed into the actual Body and Blood of the Lord, that this change was wrought in each consecration by a Divine miracle of creation, and that the sacramental body was identical with the historical body in which our Lord was born and died and rose again, and was now seated at the right hand of God.

It might seem as though this involved a complete surrender on the part of instructed theology to those crude popular conceptions of which I have spoken. But this was, in fact, far from being the case. For Paschasius, deeply influenced by the Greek theologians, especially John of Damascus, held that the body of the Lord's Incarnation had throughout its earthly sojourn that "spiritual" character which it openly manifested after the Resurrection and

in its Ascension to the heavenly places. Not only, therefore, were none of those carnal notions which popular belief associated with the Sacramental Presence justified, but they were blasphemous errors which needed constant rebuke and reprobation. And further, Paschasius insisted as strongly as Augustine himself that the Sacramental Presence was only to be discerned and apprehended by that deep inner faith which habitually dwelt in the invisible order. Only the faithful could receive and feed upon that invisible Presence which the Sacrament really contained. The "manducatio infidelium" was, therefore, another blasphemy against the Divine Mysteries which they themselves reproved by becoming to the unfaithful a judgment of damnation. The sacramental food was a food for the elect only.

Paschasius had thus done much to give theological satisfaction to the current beliefs implicit in worship while correcting and condemning its worst excesses. His theory of the Eucharistic Presence was antecedently acceptable, and was, therefore, very generally accepted. Yet in the person of another member of his own religious house, Ratramnus, the more

cautious theology of the ancient tradition made its protest, a protest which was for the moment unheeded and almost unheard. It was only two centuries later that protest was revived in a much more trenchant form and with much greater dialectical skill by the famous Berengar of Tours (1000?-1088). With a pathetic confidence in the power of reason to confine the torrent of popular religious feeling within the artificial channels of a safe theology, he laboured for thirty years to expose both the rational contradictions and the theological novelty of Paschasius' theory. And when after his final retractation in 1079 he gave up the struggle in despair, the doctrine of Paschasius had definitely triumphed and Berengar's firm reasonableness had already become in fact the heresy which the Lateran decree of little more than a century later would make it formally. Yet his protest had not been altogether in vain. As we shall see presently, he had bequeathed one phrase to the later theology, which did much to correct the worst excesses of later developments of the Paschasian doctrine.

St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), born just ten years after the Lateran Council, inherited therefore the Transubstantiation theory

as the official teaching of the Church. To him it fell to justify the reasonableness of the doctrine in so far as it did not altogether transcend the sphere of reason. And it was the great distinction of St Thomas as a theologian that none saw more clearly than he the exact point at which faith transcended reason or more carefully marked the limits of their respective territories. No theologian, for instance, has done more to make the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation "reasonable," to demonstrate, as far as it is demonstrable, their accordance with reason. But none also has been more careful to assert that they were beyond all possible discovery of reason. And it was inevitable that he should place the doctrine of the Eucharist in the same category of purely revealed truths of faith, if for no other reason at least because the Lateran Council, with a true insight, had placed that doctrine in closest vital connection with those of the Trinity and the Incarnation. These three formed, in fact, a kind of "trinity in unity" of the specifically Christian Revelation.

Now before entering upon St Thomas's treatment of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and in order that we may do so with

the more intelligence of the questions at issue, let us consider both the faith-content which had to be explained and the methods of explaining it which had so far been employed. That faith-content may be put in one phrase —"Hoc est corpus meum" "This is my body." There was no biblical criticism in the thirteenth century, as there was none in the sixteenth, as indeed there was none, which was allowed, at least, to enter with its disturbing influence the sacred domain of Christian theology, till the late nineteenth. And further, the mediæval mind was in the last degree unappreciative of the concrete poetical imagery of Hebrew literature. It was desperately literal. The letter of Scripture was, therefore, sacrosanct. Its authority was so unchallenged that, just as among Fundamentalists to-day, the most fantastic allegorising of a Scriptural text could be invoked as witness to truth from which there was no appeal. St Thomas himself, for instance, defending the corporeal Presence in the Eucharist, quotes the words of our Lord as a promise of that Presence: *Ubi fuerit corpus, illic congregabuntur et aquilæ,* words which in our English version appear as, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the

eagles be gathered together"! We need not then, wonder at the violence done to the conference-table at Marburg by Luther's passionate assertion of the final authority of the *Hoc corpus est meum.* From what he deemed to be the implications of that tremendous assertion he could not retreat, with the result that a hundred and fifty years later Bossuet could thank God that the doctrine of the Real Presence had among the Lutherans "remained entire and inviolable."

All Christians then believed that by the act of consecration the elements of bread and wine became the Body and Blood of Christ, and they believed it because He Himself had instituted the Sacrament in and with those words. But they believed also that the Presence was for faith. That indeed was a necessary result of the definition of faith as the apprehension of the invisible, and of the fact that the Sacramental Presence was an invisible presence. So far, granted the initial belief in Revelation, there was no difficulty. By the act of consecration the Presence was there for faith to apprehend, and being there invisibly only faith could apprehend it. But the Presence was there not simply to be

believed in. It was there to be received by the faithful, to be apprehended and assimilated as a spiritual nourishment just as food is absorbed and assimilated into our bodily substance. And here, obviously, the co-operation of faith became more intimate, the Presence in a sense more dependent upon it. There entered in at this point just the possibility of faith being regarded as itself procuring the Presence. The main stress of St Augustine's Eucharistic teaching, for instance, was directed towards the prerogative importance of faith in sacramental reception. And as in popular belief the fact of the Presence—of the Presence, remember, as the veritable Body of Christ, the Body in which He had lived—rapidly assumed a kind of independent importance, the language of Augustine might easily come to seem insufficient. St Augustine himself, of course, held, as all Christians held, that the Bodily Presence was there, from the moment of consecration, for faith to apprehend and receive. Neither for him nor for any theologian before Zwingli, certainly not for Luther or even Calvin, was faith in any sense merely constitutive of the Presence which it apprehended.

Yet the rôle of faith with the earlier theologians was important enough to affect perceptibly the conception of the Bodily Presence in the Eucharist. And it was on this point that all popular interest rapidly centred and all learned controversy turned. That the Body was there in a sacramental manner, hidden behind the veil of the consecrated elements, was conceded by all. But was it there in a kind of spiritual association with the material elements, there in all the virtue of its Divine healing and nourishment for the faithful to receive, or was it there in some still more miraculous manner replacing as it were the elements still present to sight? Popular belief could be satisfied with nothing short of the latter view, and of that view pushed to all its logical consequences. The Body in which Jesus had died was present on the altar and miraculously manifested itself from time to time to privileged vision in all the circumstances of its earthly sufferings. There were, for instance, innumerable stories, some of them claiming the authority of great doctors and saints, as for instance of St Gregory himself, of the wafer having appeared in the form of a child or of the bleeding flesh of the Crucified.

It was in response to the demands of such a state of feeling and belief that Paschasius, himself a man of deep and fine religious sensitiveness, wrote. His doctrine was a correction of all the worst grossness and crudity of popular belief. As we have seen, he insisted as firmly as Augustine himself on the necessity of a true spiritual faith to all worthy reception, to any reception of the ineffable and Divine reality which it conveyed, or rather which it was, of the *res sacramenti*. But he satisfied the popular demand by affirming that in the consecration the elements were changed into the Body and Blood of the Lord, and that their appearances still remained only as an opportunity for faith. It was a difficult, indeed an impossible task, which Berengar set himself to centuries later when he attempted to stem the tide of popular religious belief hardly restrained in its impetuous flow by the more careful distinctions of the theologians. Berengar, indeed, was pure Augustine, though an Augustine turned dialectician. He, of course, asserted as strongly as his master that the elements became by consecration the Body and Blood of Christ, but contended also that that mysterious change did not mean that the bread and wine had ceased to exist.

But by now the mere assertion of their continued existence seemed also the denial of the Real Presence of Christ. The theory of an actual miraculous conversion of one substance into another had come to stay. At one point only did a phrase of his remain to arrest the materialised conceptions into which the sacramental feeding was being rapidly degraded. The first retractation which Berengar had been forced into signing actually spoke of the sacramental Body of the Lord, one, be it remembered, with the Body in which He lived and died and rose again as being crushed by the teeth. And many spoke of receiving in the Sacrament a *portion* of the *flesh* of Christ. Berengar, in asserting that each member of the faithful received in the sacrament the "whole Christ," the "whole Body," handed down a phase which became classical in Christian theology and of itself served effectually to spiritualise the whole idea of sacramental feeding.

Transubstantiation, then, had triumphed when St Thomas came upon the scene. The Divine Revelation in the matter of the Eucharist was no longer just the "Hoc corpus est meum." It was the "Hoc corpus est meum" as officially

interpreted by the Church in the Lateran decree. That interpretation was now a truth for faith, a truth Divinely revealed. The further business of the theologian was to demonstrate the reasonableness of that faith. It may be well, therefore, at this point to have before us the exact faith-statement with which Aquinas had to deal. "There is one universal Church of the faithful," ran the Lateran decree, "outside which no one at all is in a state of salvation. In this Church Jesus Christ Himself is both Priest and Sacrifice: and His Body and blood are really contained in the Sacrament of the altar under the species of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the Body and the wine into the Blood by the power of God, so that to effect the mystery of unity we ourselves receive from His [body] what He Himself received from ours." The interesting points about this definition are that it uses the word "transubstantiated" where Paschasius had used "converted," while it substitutes for his theory of a special "creation" in each act of consecration a change effected by an undefined act of Divine power, and that it links up in closest connection the doctrine of the Eucharist with the doctrine of the Incarnation, and in the

Augustinian manner with the doctrine of the Church.

Now the doctrine of Paschasius had, as we have seen, involved a miracle in every act of consecration, the miracle of a special creation. With his conception of God as absolute Power, there was, of course, for him no difficulty in such a conception. But St Thomas's doctrine of the Divine Omnipotence was governed by a much more complicated metaphysic which enabled and indeed necessitated a less directly miraculous view of the Eucharistic conversion. The conversion of the elements which the doctrine of the Eucharist required might mean either their annihilation or their reduction to the matter which underlay their form. St Thomas denied that either of these things happened. If the elements were annihilated, the miracle would consist in the continued appearance of what was in no wise there, and would therefore be a miracle involving a deception of the senses and so unworthy of the Divine nature of Truth. If, on the other hand, the bread and wine were reduced to their material basis, *i.e.* to the elements of earth, air, fire, and water of which they were composed, the miraculous change would necessarily be

manifest to sense. What happened therefore, according to St Thomas, was that the *whole substance* of the bread and wine was converted into the *whole substance* of the Lord's Body and Blood.

Now I have already admitted that St Thomas regarded this conversion as an extraordinary act of Divine power which transcended, strictly, the capacities of the human understanding. But that he also held that its general reasonableness could be demonstrated is sufficiently obvious from the fact that a careful treatment of it is included in his *Summa Contra Gentes*, an *apologia* of the Christian faith addressed to non-Christians and therefore purposely avoiding all appeal to the bare authority of Revelation. For his statement and defence of the doctrine we may therefore confine ourselves to the condensed exposition of it contained in that work, neglecting the more elaborate examination which the *Summa Theologica* allowed and indeed required.

We must first of all keep in mind St Thomas's fundamental distinction of the supernatural and the natural orders. The whole of man's religious life belonged to the supernatural order. It all lay within the dispensation of

grace. His psychical life, on the other hand, his life as body informed by a rational soul, belonged to the natural order. Yet not entirely; for the reason, which in man was associated with body and began to operate through the stimulus of bodily sense, was of the same nature as the pure intelligence of the immaterial substances we call angels and as the Divine Intelligence itself. It was in virtue of his reason that man was said to be in the image of God. And further, man, simply as man, as rational animal, had his only satisfying end, his final blessedness, in the knowledge, the intellectual vision, of God. Man therefore, even as a creature of nature, stretched across the borders of the supernatural order, so that in him the interdependence of the two orders was established.

But it is only through St Thomas's conception of the Divine nature, that his view of the relations of the two orders can be fully understood. As God was the sole ultimate and underived source of being, they were both His creations. As He was the Supreme Good, both required and sought Him as their end. As He was the Supreme Intelligence, both were subject to the same laws of intelligence, or were

intelligible in the same way, if not in the same degree. As He was the First Mover, the source of all movement, both were obedient to common laws of vital change or process. And therefore they were both "orders"—the supernatural as much as the natural. The supernatural order was not a mere series of unrelated and arbitrary miracles, but an order governed by and expressing its own laws. And if those laws could not be called a mere extension of natural law, they nevertheless included and perfected that law. They might be described as a "transubstantiation" of that law, a conversion of it into higher terms. At any rate the supernatural order was in the Divine intention the completion of the natural, and without it could not itself exist.

If, then, the conversion effected in the Eucharist implied certain special acts of Divine power, it was not on that account necessary that they should be mere wanton violations of natural law. Rather, just because they were acts of Divine Power, and because it was that same Power which manifested itself in the laws which governed both orders, it must be possible even for the human intelligence to explain, however inadequately, their tran-

scendence of natural law. Now the conversion of one *substance* into another was unknown to natural process. All the conversions known to nature required some permanent material ground in which the change took place. Nature could change the form of things only. It had no power of creating the matter in which the change of form took place. If a seed became a plant and a plant became a flower or fruit, what had happened was that certain pre-existent matter, contained in the original seed or absorbed by it in the process of growth, had in growing taken on successively new forms. The conversions involved in natural growth were formal only. But in the Eucharist the whole substance of the elements was converted into the whole substance of the Lord's Body and Blood. Now by substance St Thomas meant a thing's quality of self-subsistence. Other qualities of a thing, such as its shape, size, and colour, were incapable of independent existence. They were accidents capable of existing only in the substance. Think, for instance, of a human body. The soul or animating principle of that body is its substance. Everything in it, by which it is known to the senses, is an accident. Further,

the substance of body as self-subsistent, as not dependent on such accidents as extension and the like, exists in its wholeness in every minutest portion of the extended body. Yet the substance of any corporeal thing, strange as it may sound, consists of both matter and form.

Here, again, we must take account of the meaning of terms familiar to the Aristotelian world of thought, but no longer familiar to us. For the physics of yesterday or the day before—it would hardly be true of the physics of to-day—matter was something which could be seen and handled. For St Thomas it was something which could be neither seen nor handled nor even in the strictest sense known. It was just a name for the universal potency which had to be postulated as the basis or substrate of every material or corporeal thing. That is to say, it was not, according to the Aristotelian-Thomist view, of the very essence or substance of matter that it should be extended, as later Descartes and Spinoza held that it was. Extension was for St Thomas a mere accident of matter. And so matter was capable of becoming anything, and it became some particular thing in virtue of the particular *form* which it assumed. It was *form* that gave *matter* its

actuality, that turned its indifferent potentiality into actual being. The substance therefore of a thing, of what St Thomas called a subject, included both matter and form. That is to say, a thing was self-subsistent because in it the indeterminate potentiality of things had become actual in a particular form.

Now, as we have seen, all the conversions known to nature are conversions of the same matter from one form into another. Nature has no power of converting one substantial thing into a wholly different substantial thing. It cannot, to use St Thomas's example, make *this* finger become *that* finger. And this very example introduces us to another fundamental principle of St Thomas's philosophy, viz., that each particular thing has as its individuality in virtue of its matter. The same forms can be impressed upon different portions of matter. This finger has the *form* of any other finger. But it *is* this particular finger in virtue of the particular portion of matter on which the common form is impressed. The operations of nature, therefore, are confined to changes of form within the same individuated portion of matter. But the Divine power is not limited by the powers which it has itself delegated to

the natural agent. As it brought into being the matter which is the subject of natural conversion into new forms, so it can convert the whole substance of matter and form of one thing into the whole substance—matter and form—of another. And such is the conversion effected in the Eucharist.

But this conversion is effected so that all the sensible qualities of that which has been converted—the bread and wine—remain. The substance of the elements has become the substance of the Lord's Body and Blood; the accidents remain the accidents of bread and wine. But accidents by their very definition are not self-subsistent. They exist only in, and for, the substance to which they belong, and that substance itself no longer exists. How, then, is their continued existence other than apparent, a mere illusion? Again, of course, for St Thomas it is an extraordinary act of the Divine power, but one nevertheless of whose method some reasonable account may be given. For he held that of all accidents or sensible qualities dimension or measurable quantity is nearest to substance, since by its mediation all other qualities inhered in substance. Colour, for instance, was present in a

thing through its surface, heat throughout its mass. If, therefore, by an act of Divine power the measured quantities of bread and wine remained, all their other sensible qualities could still be conceived of as inhering in them. The accidents therefore remained within the measured extent of the bread and wine as in a quasi-substance. And not only did they thus remain, but they retained besides all the properties, both active and passive, of the original substance of bread and wine. They nourished and refreshed the body, the wine if drunk in sufficient quantities would intoxicate, the bread could be eaten by mice, they were subject to corruption and putrefaction. The accidents subsist after all, just as if they were in their proper substance. And so St Thomas's last word has to be *miraculose*.

All this rationalisation of a mystery may seem to us intellectually futile and religiously almost irreverent. But to the robust intellectualism of St Thomas it was far from seeming so. He knew indeed that every statement of faith was a mystery which necessarily transcended the reach of human intelligence, itself for him the lowest of all intelligences, since it had to start on its quest of even the highest knowledge

from the lowly data of sense-perception. But he believed, too, that man was made in the image of God just in virtue of his rational faculty, and that man's ultimate blessedness consisted in the intellectual vision of God. And therefore he held that every mystery of faith was an immediate revelation from the Supreme Intelligence which man, divinely equipped with reason, must strain upwards to meet and apprehend. The mystery of the Eucharistic Presence was one of the supreme mysteries of faith. More than any other, except those of the Trinity and Incarnation, it eluded rational apprehension. The most the Christian thinker could do was to determine the exact character of those extraordinary acts of Divine power which were involved in it, and to show how they transcended and fulfilled those natural operations which were also of Divine origin and ordering. St Thomas might, like Paschasius, have contented himself with saying that the *Hoc est corpus meum* meant that God had by a miracle changed the bread and wine into His Body and Blood and had left their appearances to heighten the merit of faith. But for St Thomas a miracle was not an arbitrary act of the Divine power. It

was, on the contrary, an act which had its place within an infinite order of cause and effect, part of which was open to our intelligence while part transcended it. And although that order was divided into the two realms of the supernatural and the natural, they were both creations and expressions of the same Supreme Intelligence and Will. In one of those realms that Supreme Power operated through natural agents by means of which mere potency was more and more fully actualised. In the other He operated through His infinitude of power, which was Pure Act without any remainder of potency whatsoever. But in the eternal unchangeableness of that Pure Act all the temporal activities of the world of becoming were already contained, as from it alone they proceeded. This was the sole ground of the intelligibility of things and the sufficient reason for man's effort to understand them. Man sought to know anything in order that he might ascend to the knowledge of God. Philosophy was the handmaid of theology, but it must be a philosophy, St Thomas contended more resolutely than any of his theological predecessors, which was free to deliver its own findings.

Thus the distinction of St Thomas's explanation of the doctrine of Transubstantiation is that it was an explanation in terms of the fullest philosophical knowledge of his time. He addressed it—at least in the *Summa Contra Gentes*—to those who shared his philosophy but not his faith, with the design of commending to them the general reasonableness of his faith. If his explanation has no power to persuade us, it is less because the modern development of physical science has antiquated his philosophy than because it has annexed the terms of the old philosophy and entirely altered their meaning. It is the very familiarity of such terms as "substance," "matter," "accident," "form," "power"—their familiarity as representing ideas of physical science and not of philosophy—that constitutes our chief difficulty in understanding St Thomas, and doing justice to the magnitude, the thoroughness, the sincerity of his intellectual effort. But if we cannot, for this and other reasons, be quite just to the greatness of the thinker, we can at least see what his exposition did to spiritualise the conception of the Eucharistic Presence. First of all the Presence was there to be discerned by faith alone. The substance of the

Lord's Body and Blood really present was of those invisible things which it was the special province of faith to discern. It was there all the more for faith, in that the sensible qualities of bread and wine really remained in a kind of quasi-substance and retained all their natural properties, both active and passive. Secondly, the Presence did not exist in space, since substance—the substance of *anything*—does not exist in space. The substance of the bread and wine, for instance, was not distributed locally throughout the whole area of space which the bread and wine occupied, so that a different part as it were of the substance was present at each point of that area. No, substance was of such a nature that it existed in its wholeness at every point of the area of the subject to which it belonged. It had relation to extension at all only because its subject was extended.

Now the substance of the Lord's Body and Blood, existing in the Sacrament apart from its own sensible qualities, had even this kind of relation to space only through the medium of the continuing accidents of the bread and wine. If it could be said at all that the Divine Presence was locally confined to the space occupied

by the accidents of the bread and wine, it was only because their, and not some other, substance had been converted into it. But in no strict and accurate sense could it be said that the Presence was local. Thus nothing that was seen or localised was an object of worship. When in the late sixteenth century the Jesuit theologian Vasquez contended that the visible elements might be worshipped because of their connection with the invisible Presence, he was lending the theologian's aid to an instinct of popular piety which St Thomas and the Council of Trent had done their best to reprove, and which Bossuet, a century after Vasquez, indignantly repudiated as in no kind of accord with Catholic doctrine.

Again, the idea of substance enabled St Thomas to rescue Berengar's expression of the "whole Christ" and to make it classical for all later theology. That the "whole Christ" was received by the faithful was Berengar's noble form of protest against excesses to which the doctrine of Eucharistic conversion taught by Paschasius might easily lend itself. In the mind and intention of Paschasius himself it had, of course, no such consequences, as I have already, I think, sufficiently indicated. But the

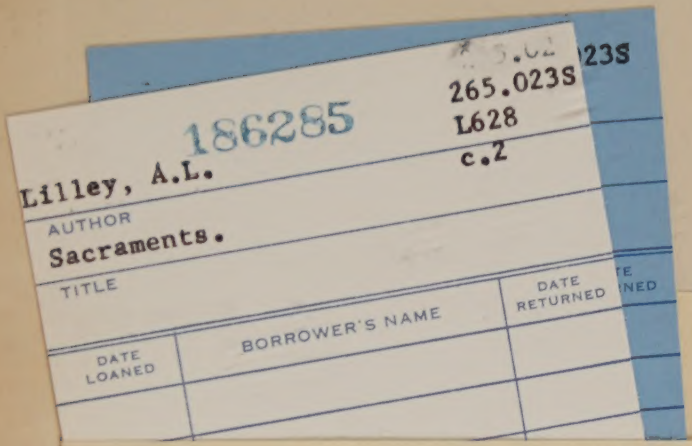
use of such expressions as *manducatio infidelium, portiuncula carnis,* and *teri dentibus*—they are best left in their original Latin—shows how that doctrine was in fact perverted even by those who claimed to be theologians. St Thomas's definite use of the word "transubstantiation" to describe the mode of the Eucharistic conversion, his claim that it was the whole substance of the bread and wine which was converted into the whole substance of the Lord's Body and Blood, did all that was possible to reprove and correct such carnal notions of the sacramental feeding. That formula definitely provided for the idea of the reception of the "whole Christ" through, as it provided for the presence of the "whole Christ" in, every least portion of the sacramental species.

But St Thomas went further still to secure the fully spiritual character of the reception by his doctrine of "real concomitance." The form in which our Lord had Himself instituted the Sacrament—the form, therefore, by which it became in every consecration the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood—was *Hoc est corpus meum, hæc est calix sanguinis mei.* And that meant that it was into the substance of the Body and Blood *only,* the Body of

the Divine Humanity, that the sacramental elements were converted. Now it was just this fact that might still leave a way open for some remnant of carnal notions in their manner of reception. The substance procured by the Eucharistic conversion was indeed strictly the substance of the Lord's Body only, the substance of everything that went to the constitution of that Body—blood, bones, nerves, etc. But that substance, St Thomas insisted, even though it was the exclusive subject of the conversion, could not exist in reality without the Divinity with which it was inseparably united. Therefore, the "whole Christ" in His Divine-human nature was received in the Sacrament.

My object in this essay has been twofold—first, to show that St Thomas as a theologian had thought out in fullest detail the relations of what he believed to be the revealed doctrine of the Eucharist to the world-view of the Aristotelian philosophy which he had himself learned so thoroughly; and secondly, to show that his exposition of the doctrine was directed to, and largely succeeded in, giving it a deeply spiritual and religious character. His world-view and his conception of knowledge have

alike become long since antiquated and insufficient. They can be of little use to us in explaining the things either of this world or of any other. His categories are for us either obsolete or converted to other and humbler uses. And we would hardly dare, in the conditions of intellectual dismemberment and dispersion which the modern pursuit of knowledge has imposed upon us, to attempt a task of such magnitude as he and his contemporaries regarded as their ordinary day's work. We are contented, because we are compelled, to leave as "mysteries" the irreducible data of our faith. Each one explains them as best he can, or more generally perhaps repeats mechanically the common formula in which tradition has enshrined them. Here St Thomas, if he cannot help us, can at least put us to shame. But one heritage, of priceless and permanent worth, he has left us—the magnificent vindication of the spiritual nature of our Christian faith even where it is most closely associated with ideas which might easily lead to magical belief and practice.



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